[facing p. 111]

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# I

## PRENATAL CARE. BIRTH. CHILDREN.

842 Valuation of children. Every Guajiro family group endeavors to increase the number of its members as much as possible. As a consequence, every birth is acclaimed with happiness so that no newborn suffers from the problem that his arrival may not be welcomed by his parents or relatives. On the contrary, he will always find his place within the group, in which it is hoped that he will play his part adequately.

614 The fact is that the importance of any group depends on the number of its members, as it can be observed that, although some groups are economically strong, the relative scarcity of men causes the loss of directive positions and influence. Relations between clan groups are on a par when they are more or less matched in the number of their males; otherwise any problem pending between them will be decided in favor of the side where the greater influence of the men weighs more. In order to balance forces, the weak group must seek alliance with other groups.

614 554 Notwithstanding the general eagerness to increase numerically in order to keep the balance or a more just social situation throughout the peninsula, there are some groups that are not so inclined. These are those that have fallen into an inferior state which obliges them to be put at the margin of Guajiro life, where they end up suffering all kinds of injustice and ill-treatment from the others who, finding no force to withstand them, profit by this and, for any reason whatsoever, confiscate their property, deny them all rights, and burden them with demeaning situations like bond service. Such, in brief, is the lot of groups that have few male members and few economic resources. This being so, as a sort of passive defense, the women refuse to conceive: They make use of every empirical recourse to limit maternity. They use herbs which are prescribed

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614 /1 cont./
554 for delaying menstruation during the seclusion following the
[849] appearance of puberty, so that the organism may become weakened and the menstrual cycle no longer appears, with which their matrimonial life does not bear fruit. They know beforehand /2/ the destiny of their children. When they become
[567] of useful age a stronger group will fall upon them to enslave them under any pretext -- such as the loss of an animal whose disappearance will be attributed to them without any outcry or civil authority aroused to impede this, and, the injustice inflicted being proved, without any punishment being applied to the aggressor group. Their daughters will be taken as wives
614 without the necessary Guajiro payment, or, simply, they will
554 abuse them, there being no family backing to oppose the de-
593 mands of the men belonging to the stronger groups. If a daughter should be bought, only a nominal payment will be made to silence the protests of her family, but later a very heavy matrimonial retribution will be demanded. Generally, the husband will brag about the way in which he ill-treats the girl, knowing that she is unprotected and that her relatives have insufficient power to demand justice. Thus it is not rare that poor wives are killed by their husbands after a life in which the unfortunate women have been subjected to cruel beatings and even mutilation. And if the family has no alliance with any powerful groups, the death is not indemnified. The mothers also know that should
614 one of their sons, accidentally or in self-defense, wound or kill
554 a member of a stronger family group, the repirsal taken will
628 not be preceded by a demand for compensation payment or any of the legal requirements usually stipulated, but that his whole group will be destroyed or enslaved and deprived of its clan lands, fields, sources of water supply, and personal effects. For such reasons these weak groups are allowing themselves to die out by reducing their birth rate to a minimum.

82 Regarding the special wishes of each group as to the sex of its future descendants, we feel the need of making an analysis of the valuation which each has in the society.

/25 cont./

857 as the machorro /edible lizard/, or shooting arrows at something white or at pigeons. These are his diversions when he is herding at the times when the animals are resting or quietly feeding.

As a pastime he practices the exercise of controlling the animals he is in charge of and especially his skill in subduing and lassoing them. This gives him great satisfaction as well as training him for his future life. Also of great interest is horse riding and competing in races, which stimulate competition and /help in/ acquiring training.

Thus, the Guajiro boy can learn and play at the same time, and these activities are permitted, as his relatives find them advantageous, since they fit him for the activities he will have to carry out as an adult. Moreover, the life of the Guajiro boy is spent for the most part in the woods, and his home life is reduced practically to the hours of nightly rest and meals. During the day he is only in the company of his older brothers, his maternal uncle, or his father, and it is while with them that he may indulge in the luxury of playing, or at the times when he is free from chores. For this reason and because one sex is not allowed to take part in the play activities of the other, the possibilities of mixed games are very limited.

In spite of the endeavors of the mothers to keep their sons by every means from playing, or getting together, with the sons [614] of neighbors -- because of the danger there exists of incurring a compensation payment if a companion of another clan is injured -- at times they do join us, and it is then that they play the games just described. The boys also look for companions to help them in their chores, such as carrying a message, bringing in an animal, etc.

The girls' play activities are almost always of a type useful in training them for feminine duties. The girls, spending more time at home than the boys, have less chance of escaping from family pressure, which in the poorer classes requires them to assist their mothers in household duties and care of the younger children from a very early age. When they belong to better-class families who have female servants or slaves, they pass their

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## VII

## THE CACIQUE

614 622 Authority in La Guajira is not concentrated but is distributed among each of the clan groups into which society is divided. It is practically a hierarchy, whose primary nucleus is the small family, after which follows the extended family, which includes uncles and aunts /Spanish tíos/, cousins, nephews and nieces /Spanish sobrinos/ on the maternal side, and, finally, the clan, into which are collected all individuals bearing the same surname and possessing the same symbol animal. It can therefore be said that in La Guajira there is no authority which imposes its will on the collectivity. There are, however, mestizo individuals who, owing to their economic position and social status, have acquired a measure of authority over their Guajiro relatives and over other local groups, an authority that is exercised although not legally recognized. Because of their outstanding economic position these mestizos keep on subordinating a series of people around them: their servants with their families, their many wives and children and the families of these latter who depend directly upon them; with the economic subordination comes submission of will. The authority of these mestizos is increased furthermore because of the influence they have with civilizado /nonnative/ groups because of their personal dealings with them, and their facility in mediating facing the civilizados gives them a superior position within the collectivity. To this class of individuals the name "cacique" is given, even by the Indians themselves, but they are not caciques in the true sense of the word.

622 In La Guajira there is another institution which is also called caciquism, which we will continue to describe briefly below.

The necessary conditions for being a cacique in the Guajiro sense and the attributes and responsibilities of the position are the following.

/167 cont./

592 has some authority over them because, if during his absence some carelessness on /168/ the part of the mother causes the death of one of them, he can collect a compensation payment from his wife's maternal relatives. But at the present time, among mestizos and especially among those who contract Catholic marriages, the father's authority is immediately felt in accordance with the custom of our culture. He represents the home and the children before the other individuals of the social totality as was previously done by the uncle.

This authority has reference not only to the home and to the compliance with certain norms of courtesy, such as those of hospitality for example, but also to the decisive events in family life, such as the marriage of a son, the compensation payment for an offense, the purchase of a daughter, etc. His will is consulted, and the wife obeys it, even against the personal insistence of her mother; in other words, the mother loses authority and responsibility with regard to her children, who now use the father's name and with this the new ascribed kin relationship. /169/

## XI

## THE CLAN

614 On studying clan organization we wish to present it as it apparently must have functioned in the past and to show the changes it has undergone up to the present. To this end, we make use of mythology to clarify happenings in the remote past.

614 A story from Upper La Guajira runs as follows: "Not far
773 from Nazaret there is a hill lying behind Itojoro. There
539 Mareiwa was born under an olive tree. There he was found as a tiny infant, and he kept growing and growing as rapidly as

539 /169 cont./
614 an Indian. He ate tuuma and wore a Guajiro robe. His mother
793 was an old woman. There she had her home. The father was one Saramai who, it is also said, was a god. As Mareiwa was born under an olive tree, the tree never loses its green leaves during any summer. And when there is a storm the Indians take shelter beneath its branches because lightning cannot penetrate there.

"Mareiwa ordered that there should be an Indian girl whom they called Borunka who was the mother of all the Guajiro Indians. Mareiwa gave her a husband by whom she became pregnant, but when the time of her delivery arrived she was not able to give birth. She had already suffered three days of labor pains without birth taking place. The cause was that her genital organ had teeth. Mareiwa extracted them, and later he took from the husband two ribs, the lower ones from each side of his body, to place in Borunka so that she could give birth to children without difficulty, though not without pain.

"Since there is always some loss of blood when there is a childbirth, Mareiwa called together all the little birds: the one called Sangre de Toro /Bull's Blood/ or pincwait he ordered to go and bathe at the spot where the birth had taken place. Also /he called/ the troupial, the icó with black wings and a red breast and crest, and the macaws. The woodpecker arrived late at the bath. Mareiwa said to him: 'You came late but I will anoint your crest,' and he painted it. For this reason, all these birds have red patches.

"Borunka had several children, and thus the Guajiro went on multiplying. When they became numerous, Mareiwa returned and distributed among them seeds of watermelon, corn, and melon, all of which the Guajiro eat to this day. Until this /170/ time the Guajiro had not sown seed, but had collected only the wild fruits of the forest. Mareiwa brought together all the troupials and woodcocks /zancalargas/. A flock of these he sent far away, very far away, and there they

/170 cont./

539 ate prickly pear and iguarayas. He also called a flock of
●614 pigeons of the woods that brought cherries from Hepechi. Then
773 Mareiwa dispersed these little birds all over La Guajira, who with their excrements showered seeds, which germinated in the earth, covering it with plants which bore fruit and served as food for the Indians.

"To each male Indian Mareiwa gave a pair of animals: goats, burros, cows, horses, and pigs. Then he brought them all together with their animals at a place called Arachi, near Siapana, (to the S. W. of Nazaret), and on a stone he engraved the marks he gave to each group of Indians, sons of Borunka. And even today the marks on that stone can be seen.

"There he formed the Epiayú, Ipuana, Uriana, Sapuana, Jayariyú, Apshana, Sijuana, Urariyú, Epinayú, Jitnú, Soriyú, Pausayú, Uriyú, Woriyú, Urenanaka, Matpishana, Uyarayú, Wariruyú, Jusayú, Woruboruyú, etc. Mareiwa gave them these marks so that the livestock of one would not be confused with those of another.

"Each group has an animal which distinguishes it from the others: These animals (the present-day totems) according to the creation myth were to have become Indians, but they ate the livestock that Mareiwa had distributed to each group and he, then, to punish them left them in their primitive condition as a symbol of the group they had offended. Thus, the royal turkey buzzard for example ate a cow /res/ belonging to the Epiayú so for this reason it became the symbol of that group. The caricari ate an Ipuana animal and so remained with them. The Uriana have the jaguer /as totem/ because it did the same. The Sapuana group have the bittern; the Jayariyú, the dog; the Apshana, the buzzard; the Sijuana, the wasp; the Urariyú, the rattlesnake; the Jitnú, the fox; the Soriyú have the cataneja; the Pausayú, the bee; the Uyarayú, the stag /Venado Cauquero/, etc."

Another story relates: "... as there was nothing on the Earth, Mareiwa said: 'What shall I do so that there may be something and so that I may then return to Heaven?'

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"He then said to the birds, who were Indians at that time, 'Make your homes and your enramadas /bough-covered shelters/ as I am going to Heaven and I will return.' He went away then, and a few days later he was back again from Heaven. Heaven was then like the Earth today with similar trees and fruits. The birds, who were Indians, did not carry out the order of Mareiwa as they neither built houses nor enramadas. When he returned, Mareiwa found out that what they had built were nests in the trees. /171/ Mareiwa told them angrily: 'Turn into birds and be Indians no longer since you did not obey, and from this originated the different kinds of birds.

"After cursing the birds, Mareiwa took up a quantity of clay and began to make dolls like those that are made now at Jarara and various other kind. He sent for the cucarachero /in Colombia and Venezuela, a songbird which eats cockroaches. -- Ed./ to sing to the dolls while he was making them. The bird did so and in its song mentioned the color and kind of clay of which they were made. He later called for the woodpecker and said to him: 'Go and look for my grandfather,' and when he had come he ordered the bird: 'Name the clan of each one of these dolls.' He said: 'This is Apshana; this Epiayú: this Uriana, etc., etc., etc.' In payment for having named the clans so well, Mareiwa gave him a white necklace which he still wears. Finally, the bird said: 'The Ipuanas and Sapuanas will be allies in matters of putchi (war); the Epiayú with the Apshana.' 'Very good,' said Mareiwa.

"All the groups having been named, the clay dolls were converted into real men and women. Mareiwa then distributed the women and sites so that there should be no fighting afterward. Thus he said: 'You will live with your wife there; you here, etc.' Nowadays the men look for and take more women, but in those days Mareiwa gave each only one. These are latter-day customs. He put the Ipúana in Jarara, the Epinayú in Lower La Guajira, the Urariyú in the region of Nazaret, the Epiayú in the region of Puerto Estrella, and so on with all the rest who were distributed

/171 cont./

539 throughout La Guajira. Mareiwa spoke with them for the last
614 time to bid them farewell. Thus he spoke to them: 'That is
773 what I wanted, that you should live here. I am going away now, but will continue to watch over you from Heaven.'"

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614 To better understand their mythology, it is essential to know the organization of La Guajira. Let us see this in brief.

The whole peninsula is divided among diverse groups having special characteristics, which have received in popular language the name of castas /"race," "breed"/. These castas are really clan groups whose most outstanding traits are the following:

1. Each one, as we were able to see in the preceding stories, has a totemic animal which serves to group together all the individuals belonging to the same clan. With respect to the totem animals we find the following:

| Clan | Representative animal |
|---|---|
| Epiayú | Royal turkey buzzard /172/ |
| Ipuana | Caricari |
| Uriana | Jaguar |

Alfred Jhan[9] (1) adds for this same clan group the following

1. Alfred Jhan:[9] Los aborígenes del Occidente de Venezuela /The Natives of Western Venezuela/, p. 144.

totemic animals:

| | |
|---|---|
| Uriana | Jaguar (Zone of Taroa and Bahía Honda) |
| " | Rabbit (Cruce coast of Maracaibo) /Las Cruces.--Ed./ |

[9] [25, should read Jahn. - Ann Lyst]

614 /172 cont./

| | |
|---|---|
| Uriana | Pauralata (in all parts) |
| " | Jokóriú /Spanish, tuqueque/(in all the plains) |

Professor G. Hernández de Alba (2) points out for the same

2. G. Hernández de Alba: Etnología Guajira /Guajira Ethnology/, p. 46.

clan group other representative animals:

| | |
|---|---|
| Uriana | Jaguar (Canahapur) |
| " | Lion (Guasach) |
| " | Cat (Mussa) |

In spite of the diversity of the representative animals ascribed to the same clan group, all agree in pointing out first of all the jaguar for the zone where it predominates; moreover, it is the best known in the entire peninsula.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sapuana | Bittern. For the same group Jhan, in the work and pages cited, gives "hen." |
| Jayariyú | Dog |
| Apshana | Buzzard |
| Sijuana | Wasp |
| Urariyú | Rattlesnake |
| Jitnú | Fox |
| Soriyú | Cataneja |
| Pausayú | Bee |
| Usarayú | Stag /Venado Cauquero/ |
| Epinayú | Burro /173/ |
| Jusayú | Mapuro /a kind of oppossum/ |
| Uriyú | Partridge |
| Sapuana | Machorro /edible lizard/ |
| Pushaina | Wild hog |

For some very /numerically/ reduced groups such as the Urenanaka, Woruboruyú, and Mapishana, we have not found a

/173 cont./

614 representative animal. It is not that they do not have one, but that in some regions there are no members of their group /present/, and the other people do not know them /that is, the totems/.

At the present time the association of a clan group with a particular totem animal does not imply that its members need offer sacrifices or keep taboos. The belief that they descend from it no longer prevails nor does the special prohibition that no harm is to be done to it or that it should not be killed. The idea that the genesis /of the group/ is to be found in the totem animal does not appear to have been present even in their remote past. The origins that we found in the native narratives do not include this idea. Nowadays, they laugh when one questions them about the animal of their casta; many confess proudly that they belong to the jaguar, to the bee, or to the rattlesnake.... They say they are brave, just like those animals, and that they always cause harm to whoever bothers them. Sometimes they will give an example of how the jaguar devours the other animals, and they believe it is the bravest of them all. It thus acquires the sense of a symbol that prompts them to be aggressive. However, there are others who feel troubled if they have to confess /the name of/ their totem animal as is the case of the clan group represented by the burro. The children refuse to do so and if they do name it say their animal is very ugly, that they do not like it, etc.

614 787 Where we found a strong manifestation of the survival of the identification of the individual or the group with its totem animal is in the interpretation of dreams. In some cases, if a person dreams of one of these symbolic animals, it means that he is going to have something disagreeable happen to him at the hands of some members of the corresponding clan, that he will be visited by them, that a marriage alliance is forthcoming, that some relative of whom he has dreamed is going to upset social stability by wounding one of the clan symbolized by the

/173 cont./
614 1787 animal, or the reverse, etc., according to the nature and the particular details of the dream.

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614 422 304 2. We find the origin of clan marks also commemorated in the preceding narratives. Every group of individuals with the same name living in the same place had the problem of /174/ distinguishing their animals from those near by or at a distance. Mareiwa did not want this situation to give rise to problems. Along with each group of animals, he gave the corresponding name and representative animal and the property mark, which he engraved on a stone. At the present time they still recognize the generic mark of each casta used to brand the animals and /mark/ the individuals belonging to it. Nevertheless, a variation of this original idea is to be found. Clan marks are degenerating into family marks, and in a process even further advanced we find individual marks, constituted sometimes by a special sign or by the owner's initials branded by a hot iron on some visible part of the body of the animal, or a special cut or nick in the ears of sheep or goats. Tattooing the clan mark on individuals is becoming more and more rare; it is more common in the lower than in the higher classes, and among the less acculturated than among those brought into contact with whites. Regional and family variations are found in the same clans. The clan mark persists in some localities but as an adornment, a "luxury," as they say when questioned. To this end they replace the totem by a schematic figure of the animal; and among the mestizos, by the intial of the name. The parts of the body where these marks are generally located are the upper part of the thigh on men, and the upper surface of the forearm on women.

614 422 Sometimes they still place the totem mark of the clan on objects of domestic use, (gourds, pottery, bags). But this practice is not very common. At the present time, articles of

/174 cont./

personal property are marked with letters, especially such items as clay and gourd vessels and parts of the harness of riding animals and their hammocks /chinchorros and hamacas/.

3. Naming. According to mythology, every clan had its personal name given to it by Mareiwa directly or was inspired by him. It covers all the individuals belonging to the same clan and is the indication of blood relationship. Clan disintegration at the present time has made it necessary to add to this generic name the name of the locality and the name of the most outstanding family head (cacique).

At the present time a Guajiro individual feels that in spite of being linked to another by an identical name he is not a relative /of that person/, and he makes a distinction within the same clan of diverse groups with more or less prestige. However, at a time when attacked by another group, they may make /175/ common cause if their co-operation is needed. Furthermore, the introduction of the Catholic marriage has given equal value to naming by using the paternal surname followed by the maternal surname, although in a stage of transition the second of these has greater value.

• • •

4. Consanguinity. Consanguinity plays an important role in the Guajiro concept of kinship, which embraces all individuals joined in a chain through common female ascendants, that is, uterine kinship. In this way they set aside the paternal branch, which may be found in opposition and enmity, because in the Guajiro mentality the father-son biological bond, although it exists, does not count in determining kinship. The common tie that embraces all the individuals of a clan is the mother's blood in the biological act and in the process of gestation. From this premise the Guajiro derives the importance of the spilling of blood through themselves or outsiders, because it represents the destruction of the kinship tie and of the vital element. This valuation is the outstanding concept in the regimen for social stability in the culture.

/175 cont./

614 602 Furthermore, consanguinity regulates some fundamental aspects of clan organization, such as inheritance -- of wealth and of name; group identification; the place to locate the home, the cemetery, and marriage.

Within the group of consanguineous relatives, the influence of the maternal uncle is the one most felt, since the father lacks such authority. The uncle holds in his hands the rights and obligations which in other cultures, like our own, are assigned to the father. Another concept included in consanguinity is that of considering as sons and daughters all the members of the generation immediately following one's generation, and as siblings all the members of one's own generation within the clan group. The nexus of consanguinity within the clan is kept alive in its obligations and rights by the economic and social backing given to all its members. Between the dead and the living, for example, the tie is preserved through the special ceremonial made in tribute to the former (Cf. Cult of the dead, Chap. II) to keep alive the emotional bond between past and present generations.

Relations with other clan groups are controlled through compliance with the regimen for stability and by punitive measures that control aggression. Should aggressive acts occur, the aggressor and the injured party can strengthen their /respective/ positions by /176/ alliances with other groups, thus forming a bloc with sufficient power or coercive strength to bring about a favorable legal settlement.

178 602 614 At the present time all these bonds are becoming weakened by the change in the direction of kinship. The old total group concept has changed, in consequence of various influences, into another which is almost totally opposite. In the first place, the clans show subdivisions which affect their original unity and which have come about by members of the same clan settling in different parts of the peninsula, who, after a long period of growth and assisted by the springing up of their own caciques and for want of contact with the original cell, have become veritable independent groups with a sense of unity, although they all preserve the same totem and a common name and clan marks.

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178 602 614 In the second place, we observed a limitation in the exercise of the clan's function. The concept of consanguineous kinship between all its members has relaxed to the point that consanguineous ties are considered to exist only among the closest relatives. An individual's kinsmen have become limited to his mother and her female ascendant, and to his mother's brothers and sisters together with their offspring. Some extend kinship to include relatives of the fourth degree of collaterality, and then to the brothers, sisters, and their descendants. By limiting the concept of kinship, all obligations attached to those no longer considered consanguineous are lost. Consequently, clan unity begins to disintegrate.

178 797 602 614 Another change in the concept of kinship has been introduced by Catholic marriage. It implies the abolition of the uterine affiliation, the basis of clan organization. It introduces the paternal branch into the kinship system and places it on a superior plane since the father's name and not the mother's, as it was traditionally, comes first in the offspring. /According to the Spanish custom of compound surnames, one's father's surname comes first. --Ed./ Furthermore, it destroys the authority and predominance of the maternal uncle because that of the father replaces and surpasses it.

178 614 582 5. Exogamy. The Guajiro clan was essentially exogamous. Acculturation has made marriage possible and legal between members of the same clan. In other words, clan exogamy has disappeared, and only family exogamy is followed.

614 423 178 6. Location. With respect to clan settlement the myths already quoted resolve the problem by assigning fixed regions to each of the groups which Mareiwa created. These lands are held in common by each clan, which also works them communally. The /177/ improvements introduced, such as roads, wells, and cemeteries, are made with the assistance of all the clan members who will make use of them. At the present time individual solution of the water problem has permitted the splitting up of the communal pasturage land. Furthermore, there is a strong trend toward the breaking up of agricultural land.

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614 461 476 7. Work. Labor is obligatory and communal for carrying out work necessary for the general well-being of the group. In the case of labor on property held by a single individual, aid is voluntarily lent by all the others, including men who may not belong to the same clan. The aid is reciprocated by the return of identical service when it may be requested.

614 8. Location of the dwelling. We have already spoken about the location of the home of the new family cell (Cf. Marriage residence in the chapter on Marriage).

614 764 9. The clan cemetery. Every clan group has a cemetery on its own land, built by the co-operative work of its members. In it all the members of the clan should be buried; if it is not possible to do so at the time of the first burial, it is mandatory that the ashes /sic/ at least be taken there. With the individualization of property, the small families have constructed private niches situated in sites near the family house to be used as the temporary resting place of the remains of their closest relatives.

614 571 10. Group feeling. The consanguineous tie between all the members of the same clan group had brought about a natural feeling of group unity. This feeling included a series of mutual duties and a number of rights they all could enjoy. The principal and most outstanding of the first was that of presenting a solid front in the face of any breaking down of the regimen for social stability when they felt injured by an offense or when one of the members had broken some cultural pattern, an act for which the whole clan had to bear responsibility. To get satisfaction and to give it as a total collectivity was their essential duty, as it was also to keep in force their prestige and status through adequate compliance of each of those functions which put the clan to the test.

The disintegration of the clan unit into more or less large family cells broken down the group feeling and transfered it to the family as an independent unit. /page 178 is blank/

/198 cont./

681 614 It is with this understanding that the distribution of animals is made on such an occasion, and with it, payment is made for the pain received for any offense. On the day that such a payment is to be made, all the friends of the beneficiary arrive, reminding him of, and drawing his attention to, the information they gave him and the pain that the offense has given them. At this time the services already given to the group in the past are evaluated and possible future aid is taken into consideration. The totality of various attitudes observed at this moment is known to the Guajiro by the name of jurijonear, which means "to be present at a distribution in order to obtain for any reason some part of it."

In Guajiro law there exists one aspect which we must consider: when the clan group does not accept joint responsibility for an infraction against the regime for social stability by one of its members.

One of the cases when the coercive action of the whole clan is /199/ shown is when an individual commits a delict of such a nature that it provokes in his own consanguineous relatives the reaction of considering him to be outside the collectivity, which signifies in fact that he is also outside Guajiro society. This was the case of the Kusina, marginal outlaws, who were slowly extinguished by all the other clan groups, who made common cause against them. They were individuals turned out of the clan organization by their own consanguineous relatives because of violations against the culture's regimen for social stability.

681 682 614 With respect to the breaking of the regimen for social stability by homicide, it is necessary to note the individual expiation that the violator is obliged to carry out. The offender submits himself voluntarily to a special regimen (1) the object of which is to make

1. Pineda Giraldo, Roberto. Aspectos de la Magia en la Guajira, Revista del Instituto Etnológico Nacional, Vol. III, Part 1, 1947. Bogotá, 1950. Pages 82 and following.

/199 cont./

681 amends to a certain extent for the wrong both before his own
●614 conscience and the opinion of his kin; the Guajiro murderer tries
682 by means of this expiation to avoid being again involved in an act the consequences of which have already fallen so heavily on his kin; to free himself in some way from the social coaction which his act has provoked; and most particularly to placate the dead man's spirit which from the moment of his death has followed him everywhere, crying for satisfaction and helping in the punishment of the offender. The Guajiro murderer believes so fully that he is pursued by the spirit of the murdered person that in those cases in which the author of the crime is not known, the guilty man, obsessed by such a belief, especially when he is sick, confesses his crime publicly and submits to the legal prescriptions which envelop both him and his kin.

After this regimen of expiation, the Guajiro murderer must bear the social coaction which forms all around him, expressed especially by the isolation which is imposed on him. Certain aspects of magic are connected with the murderer which oblige him to keep on the margin of society; for instance, he cannot visit sick people because he will make them worse, nor homes where there are children because they will become sick at his presence; wherever he goes he will carry with him the infuriated spirit of the dead man, which produces these evil results.

His social status goes down as an immediate consequence, and his economic position suffers considerably, because the delict of blood prohibits him from freely and efficiently exercising the productive activities which he used to perform, besides condemning him to live in exile for many long years. /page 200 is blank/

[24 cont.]

*n56 787 Shamans' dreams are interpreted by themselves in accordance with the elements that occur in them. We shall see how they do so.

If they dream that they see a burro tied to a post, turning continuously about it until it falls to the ground, it signifies that someone — the shaman will determine who — is going to die.

If in a dream they see a very swollen current of water, it implies that an interclan war will break out in the near future. If they dream of someone's death, this means that they are going to kill an animal, or it is simply the announcement of the death of the shaman himself. If, on the other hand, the dream refers to the death of an animal, it is a sign that some known person will be attacked by a serious sickness.

When the shaman dreams that a person has been bitten by a snake, that individual will be wounded by a poisoned arrow (imára), but, if during the dream some other person should kill the snake, it is a sign that both men involved in the action will have trouble and both will be wounded by poisoned arrows. If [614] in the dream two jaguars (representative animals of the Uriana clan) leap on someone, this person should be forewarned to be cautious in his relations with the Uriana, as the men of the Uriana clan are going to kill him.

Dreaming of fire is evidence of the presence of sickness accompanied by fevers; to dream of rain water in great abundance is a sure indication that in La Guajira, without stating exactly where, an important wake will be held in the near future, that is, that a wealthy Indian or Indian woman of good economic position is going to die. To see a male goat killed during a dream is to know that a boy is to be killed; to see a steer being sacrificed is to learn that an adult is to be killed. When the dream is about a small burro that is tied to a hitching post and circles around it and later falls down, this implies the death of a poor Indian. When the animal is a horse that makes the same circle, it implies the death of a wealthy Indian. To dream of blood always means a coming death in the group. [25]

• • •

[62 cont.]

825 whole period of pregnancy. The duality of childbirth-serpent
843 is brought to our notice with an insistence and disconcerting realism which we will endeavor to explain.

If we look into the Guajiro family organization we can
596 see how that community taken as a homogeneous whole is
621 divided into series of extended family groups which follow the line of maternal filiation. Belonging to a family group are the mother, the sons and daughters of the mother, the sons and daughters of the mother's daughters, and so on successively. The administration of the family is not in the hands of the father, who is not considered as such, but in those of the maternal uncles, the eldest of these being predominant. Inheritance also
428 is determined by this system, and sons inherit nothing from their natural father, but from their mother or their maternal uncles. The property of the father is split up among his nephews, sons of his sister, whom he considers as sons. Patrilocality and
591 matrilocality exist, the former predominating. The family group, wrongly named by some authors casta is very much
614 extended, and to it belong all those bearing the same surname. Each large family group has its own property mark or brand and a representative animal. Thus, for example: [63]

| Family groups | Representative animals |
|---|---|
| Uriána (41) | jaguar |

[104]

41. For the convenience of our readers we have adapted the phonetics of all these Guajiro names to Spanish orthography, using the most apparent sounds.

| | |
|---|---|
| Uráriyŭ | rattlesnake |
| Uriyŭ | snake |
| Woŭriyŭ | partridge |
| Uyárayŭ | cauquero (a species of deer) |
| Ípwana | cari-cari |
| Sápwana | bittern |

[63 cont.]

614

| Family groups | Representative animals |
|---|---|
| Jayáriyŭ | dog (42) |

42. It should be made clear that this animal symbol is, or must be, relatively modern, as the dog was unknown before the Conquest. The substitution of this for some other animal, we do not know which, must have occurred in the Post-conquest era for reasons unknown up to now.

| | |
|---|---|
| Ápshana | buzzard |
| Síjuana | wasp |
| Soryŭ | cataneja |
| Páusayŭ | bee |

The social or mythical meaning of these animals representing the extended family groups has been lost. At least we could not obtain any verbal declaration from our informants in which we could perceive the actuating presence of the totem, which is what possibly in olden times these animal figures represented. But we have in some cases been able to establish linguistic correspondence between the name of the family group and its characteristic animal. To verify this we can show some examples (43).

[114]

43. We expound this short linguistic study with some reservations since our stay in La Guajira was relatively short, two months approximately, in which length of time the study of the language scarcely reached the rudimentary stage.

192
614
825

1. uri or wih = snake
   wayŭ = Indian, people

[63 cont.]

192 uriyú = Indians (people of the snake)

●614 2. uráichiser = people of the snake

825 Wuradiru = fish-serpent, (Arawak of Guiana) (44)

44. Taken from: Anonymous: Arawakisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch [Arawak-German Dictionary]. Copy in manuscript form in possession of the Moravian Unity of Brethren at Zittau (translated from the German by Eginhard Menghius).

[64]

wayú = Indian, people

uráriyú = people of the rattlesnake

3. uri = snake

ana = (We do not know the exact meaning of this particle)

uriána = must be "descendant of the snake,"

or something similar. Here the linguistic correspondence between the family group and the name of its representative animal is lost to us, as the word or words to designate "jaguar" are karáira and kánahaput. But in any case the relation with serpent is interesting.

Another case similar to the former is shown by the Wouriyú family group, which has the partridge for its representative animal. The word for this bird is pér; on the other hand, our breakdown of the word wouriyú – bearing in mind the reservation already referred to is as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| w (from wa or wayá, "we") | = | our [masc., fem.] |
| oú | = | eye |
| uri | = | snake |
| yú (from wayú, Indian, people) | = | people |

From which we can deduce that wouriyú can be translated as "people of the eye of our snake."

[64 cont.]

192 In the case of the Uyárayú group, we find another perfect
614 correspondence between the name of the animal and that of the
825 family group:

| | |
|---|---|
| uyára | = cauquero (a species of deer) |
| yú | = from wayú Indian, people |
| uyárayú | = people of the cauquero |

614 The foregoing demonstrates the existence within the Guajiro community of the remains of an ancient clan organization, matrilineal and totemic. We say remains because the significance of the totem, as we have noted, has almost completely disappeared, since there does not exist a fixed prohibition against killing certain animals (in this case the animal corresponding to the group) nor any ceremonial ritual related to it. We do not wish to enlarge on this subject of the existence of totems in La Guajira as this will be treated in a later thesis. We only wish to emphasize the value of the serpent in Guajiro
614 magic for which no [65] clearer explanation can be found than
825 the connection it maintains with the ancient beliefs related to
843 the totem. It shows us that the greater percentage of Guajiro totemic clans are connected in their name to this creature; also that the serpent's evil effects fall directly on pregnant women, causing harm not to the children, as occurs with other animals (the fox, sparrow hawk, duck...), but directly to the mother.

• • •

825 The mother-to-be should also avoid seeing a sparrow hawk
843 because if she disobeys this ruling her child will be born bleary eyed, since they say this bird is.

843 A pregnant woman's husband must not go hunting with a
845 modern weapon — the rifle — since he can do this with the traditional weapons, the bow and arrow, for if he does not obey this rule, his wife's labor will be prolonged for a long time, and no remedies nor any other attempts to help her will hasten the birth in any way. When a husband has failed to obey this magico-preventative medicinal norm, it is necessary to obtain a rifle — preferably the one the husband used in his hunting —

682 783 [83 cont.]
warn him of the approach of danger.

7) He must abstain from all business and renounce friendships for some years, avoid social gatherings, especially those of a festive or drinking type.

8) In the case that the two family groups — that of the murderer and that of his victim — do not come to an agreement he, the murderer, must leave the country of his own free will and go to some distant place.

If the murderer should not comply with the requisites indicated, he can be certain that the spirit of his victim will deliver him defenseless into [84] the hands of his enemies, who will immediately kill him to satisfy their vengeance.

We can clearly see two essential things that stand out from these facts: (a) that the murderer, by the social crime he has committed, places himself automatically in the condition of an outcast, one impure, or more correctly, a contaminated, dangerous being. For this reason he becomes an individual who [614] must be set apart from the community. (b) The murderer's family, at the same time that it provides him with the means for going away, carrying out one of its main functions, mutual assistance among its members, takes care that the outcast does not fall an easy prey to his victim's spirit. His retirement from his habitual haunts, from his acquaintances, and particularly 682 785 from his own relatives; his disguise by cutting his hair and wearing certain articles of clothing; his not sleeping in a hammock; his avoiding his face being seen (sleeping face down); his not mixing with friends in business and in social gatherings; and finally, his going away a long distance from his clan, all demonstrate clearly to us that what the murderer is endeavoring to do — consciously or unconsciously — is to effect a total change of personality, we should almost say that he tries to convert himself into another hypothetical person, unrecognizable especially to the spirit of the person he has killed, to avoid its discovering him and taking its revenge on his body.

The clearest demonstration that the change of personality is made to mislead the murdered man is the fact that only when it is found impossible to reach an agreement between the two

526 [139 cont.]
536 shown a test of cunning between these two animals. In this tale,
796 the rabbit is the winner.

11. The man and the wild boar. One man takes the part of a wild boar, the other that of the man who stalks it. The hunter follows the boar, which runs swiftly away, dodging the hunter's arrows in its flight. In this trial of dexterity, the hunter will be the winner if in the end he wounds the boar with one of the arrows he shoots; or it will be the boar that triumphs if it is able to tire out its persecutor and dodge all the arrows shot at it.

12. The hunter, the dog, and the rabbit. This play is another trial of dexterity, as the end in view is to try the ability of each actor in the role assigned to him. It represents, in short, a hunting party, in which the man and the dog try to capture and kill the rabbit. The dog tries to catch it and tear it to pieces, while the man follows at a greater distance, throwing stones at it. If he manages to hit it, the rabbit acts as if killed, giving the victory to the huntsman. The result is the same if the dog is successful in catching his prey with his claws, but if the rabbit should evade both of them, showing greater ability and speed than the other two, he becomes the winner of the test.

536 13. The song of the serpent. We have left this section to
796 terminate our study of the theater in La Guajira because it presents characteristics different from all the other representations which we have described. It does not involve a demonstration of skill or force, nor does it require the intervention of contending
[533] groups in any way. In consequence there is no dialogue, but there is a monologue sung by the leader of the group followed by all the actors, in which the deeds of the serpent are recounted

As a clarifying note we refer our reader to the chapter "Sickness and Medicine," in which this reptile's magic power is clearly evident, especially in relation to pregnant women and all that surrounds them. We also would recall that, as in the case of
[614] the jaguar, the serpent [140] figures in the naming of the clans, at times in close association with the jaguar.

The act develops as follows: A line is formed of alternate men and women who take each other's hands. They run with short steps, undulating to copy the motion of a serpent when

4: Petrullo E-5 (1935) 1937
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the men speak some Spanish in addition to their native language. Some of them know how to read and write. They are almost entirely pastoral, possessing great herds of horses, asses, sheep, goats, and cattle. They have borrowed a great deal from the Europeans but they have also kept their own culture to a remarkable degree. As usual, native elements are most strongly present in the non-material phases of culture. Unfortunately they are not united or organized into a modern state, though against all foreigners they stand together as a unit. Authority is acquired by certain caciques through their wealth and membership in the 'casta,' the major social grouping in Guajiro society. Each casta claims a mythological origin and holds sovereignty over a well-defined territory. Many of these castas or social groupings are further subdivided. Each casta has its caciques whose function is chiefly to settle disputes and whose position is inherited, matrilineally. The oldest of them is allowed more authority, but generally it is the wealthiest man, and the one who can marshal more retainers, armed with rifles and revolvers, who is listened to with greater respect. There are further divisions in Guajiro society. At the top are the caciques and their families who are rich and powerful. The next group is composed of peons or retainers in the service of the upper stratum, and at the bottom are the 'slaves' who have been born in that condition or have been enslaved following an offense to some powerful group, and who can even be let out to work for planters in the sugar fields of Zulia The life of the poor people has not changed much since early times. Polygamy is widely practised, as is also concubinage, by the wealthier men. Each wife lives in her own rancho and there awaits the occasional visit of her husband. The children inherit property and social affiliations through the mother. Disputes that arise within a casta are settled by arbiters chosen by the families of the litigants. Disputes inter-casta may be settled by arbitration if violence is not desirable. Generally the killing of an individual gives rise to armed action with an eventual composition by payment.

My informants attempted to demonstrate the difference be-

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13



133 venting anything being landed dry. The Colombian Government
504 erected a guard-house at the entrance of this bay last year, but I am afraid it will have to be abandoned as untenable. Puerto Estrella makes a very bad port, the small trading schooners having to lie in under the breakers. This is the last recognised Colombian port, at least pending the arbitration question. The next good port is the Laguna de Tucacas, in the Gulf of Maracaybo. This place is much frequented by Venezuelans, and a trade has sprung up that if not checked will ruin the already drooping commerce of Rio Hacha. The last port on the coast is that of Cojoro, and spoken of as the future port of Maracaybo, with which it would have to be connected by rail, an engineering feat of not much difficulty. The *ensenada* or bay of Calabozo has an inaccessible, heavy, surf-beaten coast.

614 The peninsula is inhabited by only one tribe of Indians. These are subdivided into many families or castes, bearing much analogy to the ancient "clans" of Scotland. Each caste or rather family circle is united against all comers, taking up the quarrel of any one of its members to make it general. The Goajiros are strictly conservative and aristocratic
556 in their ideas, wealth and interest are omnipotent. A poor man may be
[578] insulted with impunity, when the same to a rich man would cause certain bloodshed. They have no veritable rulers, but each community
[622] recognises the wealthiest of its members as the chief or corporal, as he has been dubbed by the Spaniards, and look to him for protection. An Indian born poor, cannot become wealthy and great. Whatever herds he may accumulate, his humble origin would never be forgotten; he
[557] could, however, marry into a high caste family, having the means, and his children could become, through their mother's relations, great chiefs.
614 Besides the name, each caste or family represents some animal, and many of the minor castes, over and above their own symbol, adopt another of some more powerful denomination, to enjoy the privilege of a good protector. There are at present, altogether, some thirty odd castes among the Goajiros. Of these I was able to discover the names of twenty-two. The remainder are insignificant, little known castes, chiefly inhabiting the hills. There are about ten of importance, chief among these the "Urianas." This, the largest caste in the Goajiro, has subdivided or split up into many ramifications, such as Uriana tiger, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), Uriana gecko (lizard). This family is at present not only by far the most numerous, but also the richest; due to its connections by marriage with the Pushainas, formerly the wealthiest of the land. The Pushainas are to-day still
[558] great holders of tumas and ornaments, but with the Indian, only cattle, mules, and horses are real estate. The Urianas on receiving the tumas, sold out for cattle. The second in numbers are the Epieyues, as a rule they are poor. Under their protection are the Soouanas, again under these the small caste of the Guorguoriynes. A full list will be given

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13



in an Appendix. With the exception of the Jirnues or Piesies, a small tribe of 200 souls all told living in the valley of Macuira between Ara-ura and Itajoro, the Güaririües, a mere handful of Indians under the protectorate of the Jirnu, the Sijuanas, Secuanas, Arapainayües, Sámuriues, Araurujunas, and the Arpusiatas, all small local tribes, strictly confined to the upper country or east of Cabo de la Vela, the other castes are distributed throughout the breadth and width of the land in the greatest confusion. Living as the Goajiro does, in continual strife and warfare, whole families would speedily become poor or extinct, if they did not take the precaution to separate their wealth and herds, and only keep a few in one place at a time. Scarcity of water and pasture compels them to lead a nomadic life, and makes house-building out of the question, for they are eternally changing abode, now in the upper Goajira and then in the lower or plains. Some branches among the castes have, in spite of their roving propensities, predispositions for certain spots. For example, the proud and wealthy Pushainas are chiefly found round and about Parashi and Ataipa. Urianas tiger frequent Taroa and Bahia Honda a great deal, while near Portoto, Ipuanas and Epinayues abound. In the neighbourhood of Auipana the Ipuanas and Jusayues are in great force; at the Tota nearly all are Jusayues, and near Las Guardias at Guarero, Sapuanas; these three latter are mostly all Cocina Indians. With respect to these terrible Cocinas, the word in Goajira signifies robber, highwayman, or outlaw. They are neither a tribe nor even a separate caste as many have supposed, but simply a band of freebooters—Indians that, for quarrels, murder, thefts, &c., have been expelled the family, and must needs take to pillaging to earn a livelihood. For self-defence, and to better ply their nefarious calling, they are banded together with recognised chiefs, and so are able to go on their marauding expeditions in great force, pouncing on any less numerous or unprepared party, to strip them of everything. One party of Cocinas will rob another if they can. Nearly all the Goajiros have relations among them, but an Indian is only safe with that band to which his relation belongs. They have commercial intercourse with them, and often succeed in getting stolen cattle back. The Cocinas' territory *par excellence* is the Cojoro range of hills, taking in the Tota, traversing the plains in a narrow band, and occupying the Montes of Ocu as a refuge while scouring the plains. The country as far east as the Macuira range is not exempt from their depredations, especially between Ciapana and the Laguna of Tucacas. The principal Cocina chiefs are Alyechipara or Yorujama, as he frequently is called, an Uriana, and rules the country about Auipana and Yuripicho—he is the worst and most feared of the lot; Porón, an Arpushaina, another devil—he has appropriated the district of Cojoro; Masupain, a Josayú, lords it all about the Tota; and Morejildo, a Sapuana, is chief of the country about Las Guardias. Once the terror of the plains, this wild beast has

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5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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611 614 628 [604] In the following laws it must be borne in mind that it is not the injured individual that demands compensation, but his relations, uncles on the mother's side as a rule. From this has arisen the common error that the father is ignored; as will be seen further on, this is not the case. In compensation it is the caste that reclaims, and the caste is always the mother's side. For example, a Pushaina man marries an Uriana girl; the children are Urianas. If one of these now should kill an Epieyu, for example, the whole caste of Uriana is at war with all the Epieyues, unless the matter is amicably settled by paying blood-money.

672 683 [572] Case No. 1. Personally inflicted wounds. If an Indian accidentally cuts himself, say with his own knife, breaks a limb, or otherwise does himself an injury, his family on the mother's side immediately demands blood-money. Being of their blood, he is not allowed to spill it without paying for it. The father's relations demand tear-money, not so much. Friends present demand compensation to repay their sorrow at seeing a friend in pain. If anybody present can seize the instrument that caused the accident it is appropriated. The pay is in ratio to the injury. A slightly cut finger is settled with a little Indian corn, a kid, or such trifle. A bad cut requires at least a goat or a sheep, with other sundries. In all cases of compensation where the Indian has not the wherewith to satisfy his creditors, he goes round begging until it is obtained.

628 672 683 Case No. 2. Damage done by animals. Suppose an Indian borrows a mule or other animal, and is thrown by it, doing himself bodily injury, then his relations demand compensation from the lender, the argument being, had he not lent the animal the accident could not have happened. Should the beast belong to the thrown man himself, then he has to pay. Case of No. 1 in fact.

Case No. 3. General liability all round. This covers an enormous field. The most curious. Everybody selling rum or anything else is answerable for all the damage done by its instrumentality. Unfortunately this law is only, like many others, enforced when it is possible. As the traders know it very well, they never take rum into the interior for barter without being fully able to protect themselves. I was lent a servant as guide by a trader, who requested me not to let the man have any drink, for should anything happen to him he would be responsible to the family. Indians in employment receiving any damage the employer becomes liable; and so on. Wherever the Indian can only make the ghost of a claim he wants tear-money, blood-money, or some other money, and if not satisfied, helps himself with what he can lay his hands on. [466]

551 628 689 Case No. 4. Mentioning names. This is very serious. The Indians object to have their true names mentioned, and demand heavy compensation in aggravated cases. They generally go by a Spanish name—José Antonio, Agustin, Vicente, &c., for an Indian dearly loves to be baptised, that is, he likes the attending feast and having god-fathers on

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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122 As a last word I may say from personal experience that the Goajira is an interesting but not a beautiful country, nor is it a desirable place for travelling, either for pleasure or for commerce. Not that there is any actual danger under ordinary circumstances, but what between drunken bloodthirsty Indians, blood- and tear-money, with all the intricacies of their own peculiar laws, travelling among them is as bad as sitting on a keg of gunpowder before a big fire. It is impossible to foretell when a mere spark, accidentally or intentionally, may blow the whole thing up.

## APPENDIX.

*List of Tribes or Castes, with their respective animals and favourite resting-places.*

361/614/825

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Uriana .. | Canahapur | Tiger .. .. .. | About Tarca and Bahia Honda. |
| „ .. | Arpaná | Rabbit .. .. .. | About Cuco and Maracaybo coast. |
| „ .. | Guiupiral | A singing bird .. | Everywhere. |
| „ .. | Hokórin | Gecko (lizard) .. | Only in the plains. |
| Epleyú .. | Guaruscche | A species of vulture | Bahia Honda, Puerto Estrella, and plains. |
| Pushaina .. | Puiche .. | A species of small peccary. | Pensahl, Ataipa, and plains. |
| Ipuana .. | Mushará .. | A sort of hawk .. | Portete Jorcy, Ciapana, &c. |
| Jayarid .. | Er .. | Dog .. .. .. | Macuira and plains. |
| Jusuyú .. | Kasiaurie | Rat-snake .. .. | Tuta, Hayaro. |
| Arpushaina .. | Sumur .. | Vulture .. .. | Guinoua and plains, Cobero. |
| Sapuana .. | Garina .. | Hen .. .. .. | Plains, Guarero. |
| „ .. | Cirral .. | A species of stork .. | (?) |
| Epinayu .. | Uyára .. | A small buck .. | Portete, Hayarure. |
| Jirnu or Pinú | Guarir .. | Fox .. .. .. .. | Only in the Macuira valley. |
| Serunna .. | Gliorgúor or Guaruscche. | Species of vulture .. | Only in the Upper Goajira. |
| Urariyú .. | Mára .. | Rattlesnake .. .. | Everywhere. |
| Pausuyú .. | Huche .. | (?) | (?) |
| Sijuana .. | Cfori .. | Wasp .. .. .. | Upper Goajira only. |
| Guaririn .. | Guarir .. | Fox .. .. .. | Only in the hills of Macuira. |
| Guárin or Guan-urin. | Por .. | Partridge .. .. | Tarua and Upper Goajira. |
| Arapainayú .. | Anuwana .. | Species of vulture .. | Upper Goajira only. |
| Samurid .. | Hepépa .. | Owl .. .. .. | „ „ |
| Arpushata .. | Iachú .. | Red cardinal bird .. | „ „ |
| Uchmaid .. | Aro all Coeina Indians | .. .. | Cobero hills only. |
| Arauraujana .. | A small, almost unknown tribe in the hills of Macuira. | | |
| Gliorguoriyú | Gliorgúor or Guaruscche. | Species of vulture | Only in the hills of Upper Goajira. |

[262] N.B.—The Samurides, a very small caste, eat horseflesh and donkeys. This is considered by the other Indians to be very unclean, who, until lately, did not even eat fowls. All Indians are, however, fond of a species of lizard, "gumshor," and iguanas.

[pages 797-840 do not pertain to SC13 Goajiro]

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885

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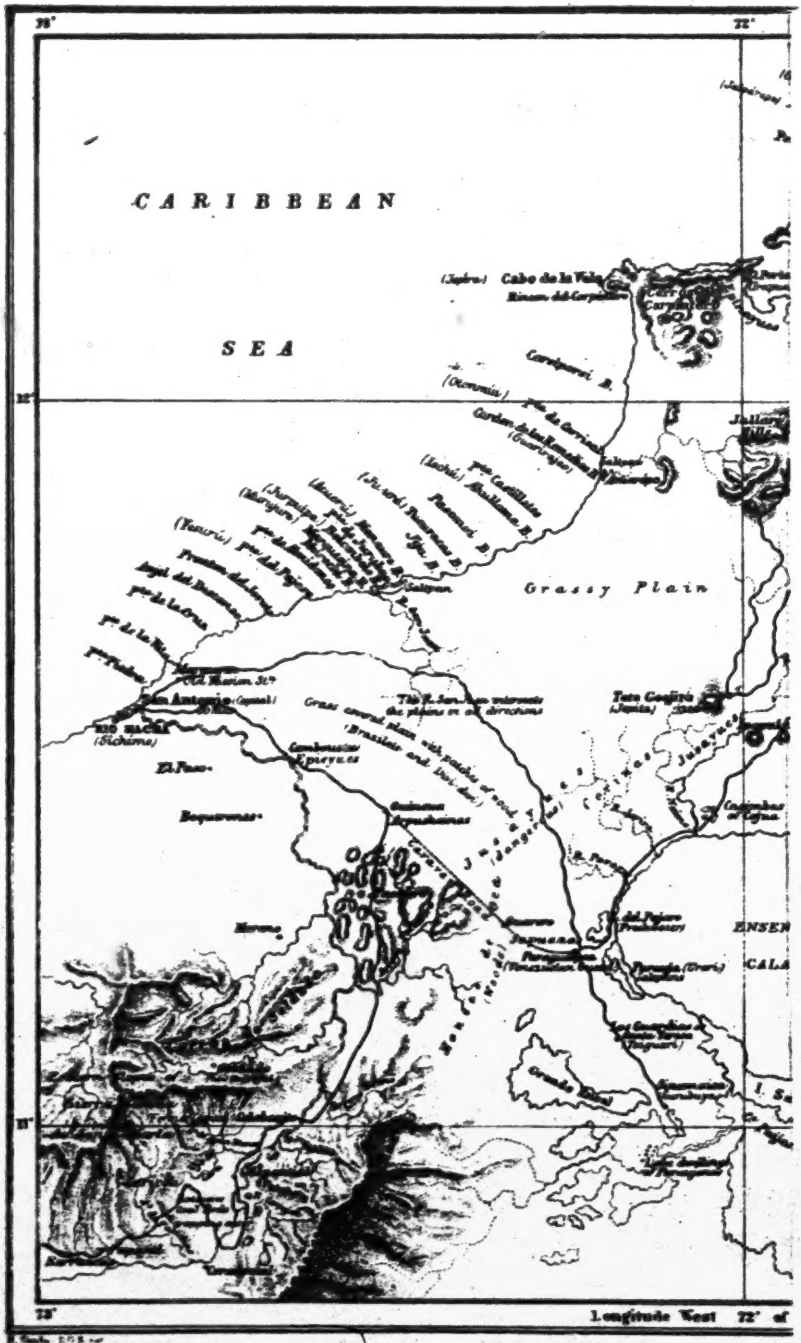


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[p. 840-A]

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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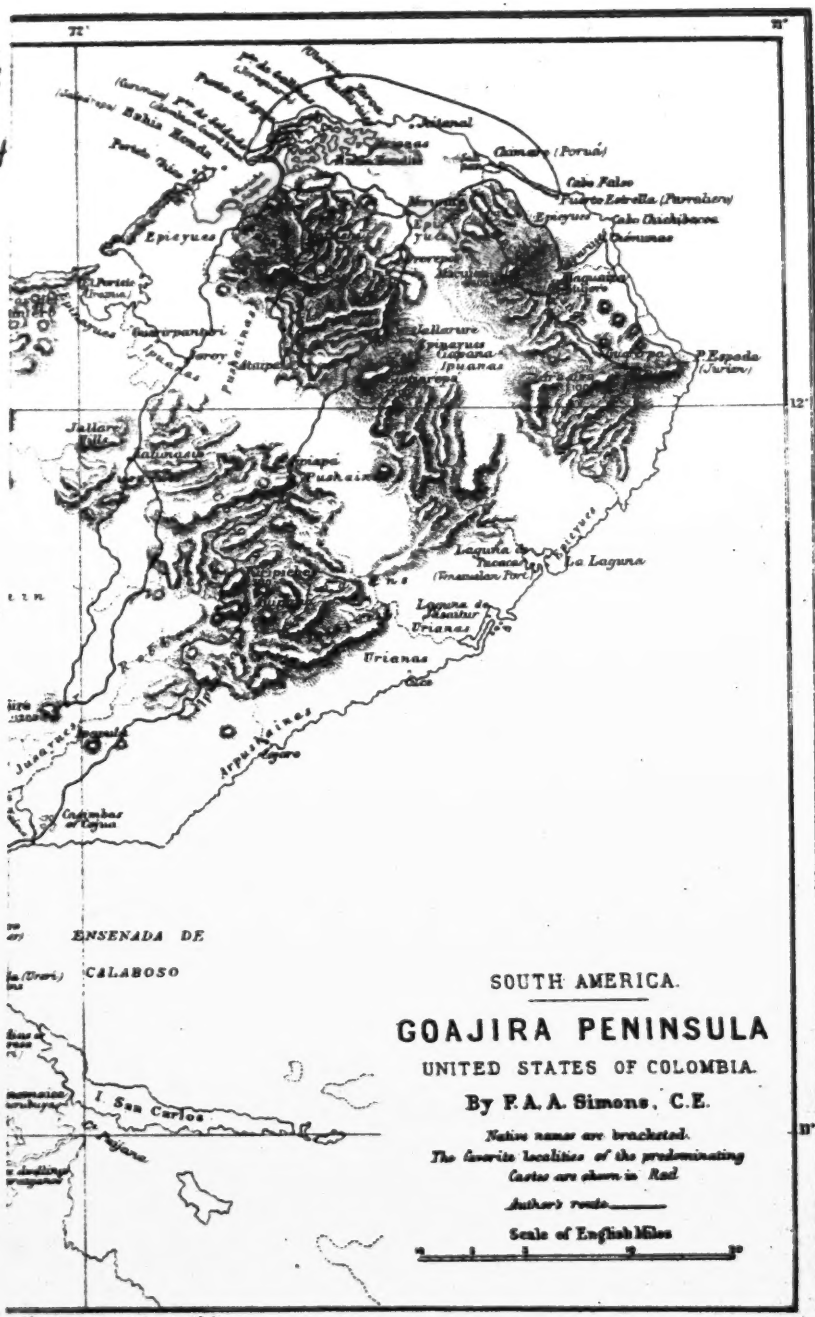


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[P. 840-B]

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
SC13 Goajiro SC13

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# ASPECTS OF THE AVUNCULATE IN THE GUAJIRO CULTURE

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THE Guajira peninsula is situated in the northwest corner of Colombia, South America, roughly between the 71° and 73° W. long., and 11° and 12° N. lat. It is rather flat in contour with only some hill ranges in the eastern part. Rainfall is scarce and the vegetation is of a semi-arid type. The region is inhabited by one tribe of Indians, the Arawak-speaking Guajiro. Both culturally and linguistically the Guajira peninsula presents a uniform block.

The present writer visited the territory in the summer of 1940, but due to illness contracted there was forced to cut short his visit. Fairly full data were gathered on all phases of social culture. The present paper deals with certain aspects of one phase only, the avunculate.

The rôle of the maternal uncle is manifold in Guajiro culture, organized as the Guajiro are into maternal sibs. Types of behavior, both prescribed and unformalized, vary, depending on the seniority of both uncle and nephew, but not on that of niece. In this paper we shall be concerned for the most part with the prescribed and voluntary relations between the oldest brother of a given woman and her eldest son, and between this oldest brother and his sisters' daughters. Other relations not involving these specified kin will be touched upon only incidentally for illustrative purposes.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13



neither was much help. Our route went in a zig-zag from 080
water hole to water hole. I did not feel altogether sure that the Gaffer would find the mission station. From what I could understand of the interpreter's inadequate Spanish and floods of Guajiro, it seemed that when the old man made his trip to the Macuira Hills, there was not yet a mission station there. I knew that it was of relatively recent date. If we could only get to Macuira, we could ask our way to the monks, I felt sure of that. Otherwise we should have to try and find our way to the little harbour of Puerto Estrella on the east coast of the peninsula. To go there involved a detour, but there would certainly be a white person or at least a mestizo there, who would be able to show us the way to Amúruru.

It seemed to us that our baquiano not only wandered round in search of water holes, but also avoided certain ranchos. What, we wondered, was the position with his clan? Was it engaged in a feud just then? I knew little of clan quarrels and blood-feuds, then.

The Gaffer now began asking everyone we met the way to 484
Macuira. It was obvious that he did not know where he 151
was and that we had a bad guide. The Guajiro have a 823
wonderful sense of direction. They find their way unerringly about their trackless cactus steppes, where every place looks alike. They know every depression in the ground, every eminence, and they all have names. Like the Arabs in the desert, they never forget a way they have once travelled, so it was obvious that the Gaffer had never before been where we were then, that he had simply gone astray. The Indians' ability to follow tracks is also amazing. [524] They can see by the hoof prints when a strange horse has been in among a herd, and they can track down a strayed bullock, even if it has joined company with others. An Indian can see whether others belong to his clan or not from a long distance off, even when he does not know them personally. They have a clan mark tattooed, or sometimes [302 304 614] painted on their thighs, it is true, but an Indian seems to know to which clan they belong, even when you cannot distinguish those marks through field glasses.

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applies mainly to children. These then become slave-workers and by right should be liberated once they have paid off with their work the sum for which they were bought, but that may not always be done. It is the mother, the uncle or the aunts who decide when a child is to be sold. This seems cruel to us now, yet it is not so long ago that children in the country were auctioned as workers in Sweden and elsewhere.

The owner of these slave-workers is bound to provide them with food and clothing as he must his slaves; thus children sold into slavery at least do not starve to death as they well might at home.

An Indian who has been unable to pay his debts must in certain circumstances go and serve his creditor. That is reminiscent of our own ancient slavery for debt. The obligation to work for another can also be a punishment laid upon a thief or a robber. As long as the slave-worker's clan is able to take action against the master if he goes beyond his entitlement, the position of the slave-worker is different from that of the slave; but if his clan is weak and unable to help him, he can be utterly in his master's power. At times a whole clan may become so weak that it has to seek the support of a stronger clan, and thereby becomes bound to work for the latter and is entirely dependent upon it.

While the master of a female slave may use her as he will, he has no right to have intercourse with a female slave-worker. Nor can he prevent others from entering into relations with her. If her clan has any voice in affairs, it will require damages of anyone who seduces her; but if her clan is powerless, then the female slave-worker is without support either of her clan or her master, and not infrequently ends as a prostitute. Prostitution is contrary to Indian law, but nowadays it does exist.

Even if a girl's clan is insignificant it will always demand damages, if someone has had relations with the girl and made her pregnant. Usually the man will pay up, that being the decent thing to do. Perhaps he wishes to marry the girl; in that case he must first pay her master the debt

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which occasioned her becoming a slave-worker, and then pay a bride-price to her family. The girl becomes free and, of course, her child is born free.

Real slaves are those taken in war. Nowadays they seldom take men or boys prisoner, but prefer to kill them instead. Otherwise there is always a risk that eventually they will try to avenge themselves. Women and girls are mostly spared and made slaves. Civil strife is common, and the Macuira Hills were no more peaceful than other areas, but the Indians were reluctant to harm the monks, though on occasion even they became involved.

One day a violent feud broke out between two clans. The chief of one clan himself led the fighting and had determined that the enemy was to be utterly exterminated. The battle raged quite close to the mission. To be anywhere near the Indians when they are fighting is dangerous, for those with rifles are seldom able to shoot and stray bullets fly everywhere. Poisoned arrows are also in the air, but they are better aimed and do not travel so far.

One day the monks heard that this chief had captured a couple of boys of the enemy clan and had ordered that they should be burned alive. The boys were reported to have been tied to a tree, round which a large fire had been lit, after which the chief's men had gone away, leaving the boys to their fate. Two of the monks set off at once for the tree. As they hurried along rain began to fall and they hoped that that might put the fire out and so save the boys' lives. When they arrived, however, one of the boys was already dead, having been suffocated by the smoke. The other was still alive and the monks carried him back with them, though they scarcely expected him to survive, for he was very badly burned. It seems pointless and cruel to kill little boys, but the Indians were afraid that, if they spared them, they would take vengeance later; thus, when they heard what had happened, they sent a message saying that the monks must hand the boy over.

The monks replied that the boy was dead. That was the only way of saving his life—if it could be saved. He died during the night, however, and was buried in the mission's

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Francisco's blood was slightly mixed, but, of course, he followed his Indian mother's clan and bore the name Ipuana. This clan's symbol is the hawk. Francisco was married and his wife belonged to the Dog clan, Jayariyú Their children were thus called Jayariyú, and Francisco was not even of the same family, though no one doubted his paternity.

Francisco served us well on our journeys. He was not especially quick-witted, but he was certainly not a simpleton. He suited us well in Guajira, for he knew both the country and the people; later, when we came to parts that he did not know, he was a little out of his depth.

Francisco's wife, Anita—the nuns had called her that—used to help my wife in our hut, and glad we were to have her, for primitive housekeeping involves much hard labour. Anita had a sweet young sister, who had not yet acquired a christian name. She was called Chinca. She had no real business in our hut, but she used to come sometimes and lounge in the doorway, looking rather fetching. We noticed, however, that after each of Chinca's visits something was missing. These were not valuable things, it is true, for we did not leave those lying about, but match boxes used to disappear and occasional packets of oatmeal. Although we still had plenty of the latter and Chinca was good to look at and welcome to stand in our doorway—we thought we would teach her not to steal. We filled an empty oatmeal packet with hay and sand and laid it conveniently within reach. Chinca came and went again, and the packet went too. A few minutes later Chinca came rushing back, flung the packet on to the floor and cursed us up hill and down dale in her own expressive tongue. We could not help roaring with laughter; a thief who goes back to those he has robbed and curses them because the stolen goods have not been to his liking! Anita begged our forgiveness on her sister's behalf:

'After all, she is a heathen and does not know better.'

'And you, Anita, do you never steal?'

'Not now. I am Christian. But when I was a heathen, ah! then I stole such a lot.'

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They were of black earthenware ornamented with figures. The women were making maize gruel. There, close to the green valleys, they ought to have been able to get any vegetables or roots they liked, yet they clung to their diet of maize and goat's meat. They had obviously put the pots on because they expected the men, and sure enough a couple of naked horsemen came galloping up, so at one with their horses that they looked like centaurs. The Guajiro Indians can be born on a horse in the literal sense, if their mothers have to be on a journey at the time. They look well on horseback, and even the old men rode well. The younger men were muscular and well-made, and more pleasing to our eye than the women.

The men had been out enjoying themselves. They had been hunting and their clan mark was painted in blue on their thighs. They must have done that to amuse themselves before they left, for normally both men and women have their clan marks tattooed.

We asked the men what they had hunted with, for they carried neither bows nor firearms, and also what they had hunted, for they did not seem to have got anything. They laughed and explained that they had had no luck, and showed us slings of plaited bast. They had been out after doves or rabbits, but had seen nothing. (The Creoles call the animal in question a rabbit, but its Latin name is *Sylvilagus cumanicus*.) They showed us the short throwing clubs with which they hunted this and made some practice throws. They were expert at hitting the target with both club and sling, but only at distances of twenty to thirty yards.

A youth showed us a whistle that he said would unfailingly entice a deer if you blew it—provided there was a deer nearby, as he hastened to add. Judging by the expression on the women's faces he was no famous hunter. A couple of men also arrived and we were able to think of doing business. We had no difficulty in buying what we wanted, provided we paid well. Prices were our great difficulty, yet these men were less spoiled than elsewhere in the peninsula. The Guajiro not only trafficked with the

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our cameras up, when a plump, middle-aged Indian came rushing up and began giving the fencers orders in a stern voice. He had not noticed us.

'That's Mauana,' Francisco whispered respectfully.

Mauana was wearing only a guayuco and brow-band, which is the genuine Guajiro garb. When he saw us, he at once spoke to us in good Spanish, which not all the chiefs know, for the Guajiro cling stubbornly to their own tongue. Mauana, of course, had heard of us. He now invited us to go with him and see how he lived.

First, we came to his plantations, which many in the peninsula must have envied him. There was a green valley, one of the oases in the semi-desert, where manioc, sugar-cane and maize grew, shaded by coconut palms, mango trees and bananas. The plots were watered by narrow canals which all came from the one stream in Guajira that never ran dry.

Mauana was obviously a strict master and he ordered his slaves about like a sergeant-major, but his plantation was a model one and he was an efficient chief who maintained order in a most commendable way. Once or twice he had caught white criminals who had hidden in the hills there and sent them back to the authorities—to their great disappointment. He lived simply, as all Guajiro do, but he had an unusually well-built house that was completely roofed.

We told Mauana of the purchi we had seen, and he used this as an excuse to give us a lesson in Indian law. Such an account of the Indians' social order and laws was both amusing and interesting, and it showed how different from ours the primitive's conception of justice can be. One knows all too well what mistakes colonial authorities have made through misunderstanding the native conception of these matters, especially of the rights of ownership.

The Indians, as has already been said, are divided into clans in which relationship follows the female line. Children thus take their mothers' names. Their fathers belong to a different clan and strictly speaking are not related to them. It is their eldest maternal uncle who is their head and guardian, and it is from him, not from their father, that they

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inherit. They hold him in great respect. A man's chief heir is thus his eldest nephew and he takes particular care of him. During his lifetime a well-to-do man will give his sons enough cattle to ensure that they will not be left destitute when he dies. Each clan has its name and its symbol: the jaguar, rattle-snake, king vulture, dog, etc., but this has no connection with totemism or magic. The Indians think no more of their name's meaning than we do, when people have animal names. They often joke about them.

A number of the clans are large and powerful, others small and weak, sometimes entirely dependent on one of the big clans. Those born into a big clan are fortunate, for they have power behind them and can count on support and help if they are insulted, threatened or robbed, for the members of a clan stick together whatever happens, united by the bond of blood. The same blood flows in all their veins. The Indians imagine that the human grows from a drop of the mother's blood, and that the foetus feeds on the new vital fluid—for they know that menstruation ceases during pregnancy.

A man does not possess the right to dispose of his blood or his life. They both belong to the clan. If he hurts himself so that blood flows he must pay damages to his clan for shedding their blood. Suicide is also punishable, though not at all unusual. After an unsuccessful attempt at suicide, the clan will claim damages, even if no blood has been shed. An Indian wanting to take his own life hangs himself. Such importance is attached to the shedding of blood, that, if someone strikes another and makes his nose bleed, this is regarded as an aggravating circumstance and increases the compensation the victim demands. His whole clan will consider itself insulted. In fact, one can really say that an Indian only has the usufruct of his life and blood.

It is the same with the land. The land in the peninsula is owned by the clans, each of which has its own defined territory. The cultivable areas are not large and lie round the few water-courses that are not dry during most of the year. These plantations are traditionally exploited by certain families in each clan and are inherited by the eldest nephews.

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423 614 It is, of course, only the usufruct that is inherited. The land can neither be sold nor given away, for it belongs to the clan. All members of a clan have the right to pasture their herds in the clan's territories, and every man also has the right to graze his beasts and to use wood and water in the lands belonging to his wife's clan. That is one of the advantages he acquires in return for the bride-price he has paid.

565 614 There has developed a class distinction unusual among Indians on the primitive level. A man of simple origins can sometimes marry into a high-born family, but he does not become any the better for that, though his children belong to their mother's aristocratic clan. It is, however, seldom that a man of humble family can get himself a girl from the upper classes—that could only happen if he had inherited or had relatives who could help him pay the bride-price.

583 614 This is so high that a young man almost always has to have the help of his clan to pay it. The relatives of a girl of really good family may demand £2000 worth of cattle, while a girl of humbler stock can be had for £50 worth. The amount can be paid in money, but that is only done in the south, in the areas belonging to Venezuela, where the Indians are more accustomed to coins and have confidence in gold.

It must not be imagined that this is a question of purchase like buying a donkey, a cow or a slave. It is a transaction that concerns both clans. One should not marry within one's [178] own clan. In the old days that was forbidden, but now they are not so strict, since the clans are often split into local sub-groups. The whole marriage transaction is well adapted to the social and economic system. (When, during the first oil rush, white workers from the Maracaibo oil fields bought poor girls, usually of half-breed parents, those were transactions whose legality under Guajiro law was merely fictitious.) The bridegroom's family helps him to pay the bride-price and contributes generously if the girl is of good family. The bride-price is to some extent regarded as compensation for what the family expended on the girl while she was growing up.

When a couple's first daughter marries, the father asks

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for her as much as will enable him to repay the cattle the clan laid out for him when he married. The amounts obtained for younger daughters are also distributed among the family in a certain way. Payment of the bride-price confers a number of benefits. During the first year the newly married couple usually live as the guests of the bride's family. As has been said, the husband has the right to use the land owned by his wife's clan. The bride always brings a dowry in the form of ornaments and household utensils, often of cattle as well. The husband must look after the cattle, unless, as happens, the girl's family sends its own herdsman to see to them. The bride usually provides all the furnishings of the huts, as well as materials, hammocks and other textiles.

These advantages offset the bride-price to a quite considerable extent. The husband knows, too, that his wife's relations will keep an eye on her when he is away, for if she betrays him, he can return her to her family and require refund of the bride-price and payment of compensation. Thus the bride-price also acts as a guarantee against a grass widow kicking over the traces.

If the husband does not fulfil his duties, or if he treats his wife badly, her family can take her back without returning the bride-price. After that the man will naturally get no help from his clan, if he wishes to get himself another wife.

It is not always possible for the groom and his relations to pay all the bride-price immediately. In such cases it is possible to pay by instalments. The groom pays a large proportion of the price when the bride is handed over to him. If he is unable to pay the balance at the time fixed, he must give the girl back, losing what he has already paid. The girl is now less valuable in the marriage market, being second-hand, so to speak. The man is made to pay for the time he has had her and thereby makes up for the lower price she can command, if a new suitor turns up. According to this principle a seducer must pay compensation to the family of the girl he has seduced. It sometimes happens that a couple fall in love and the parents approve, but the young

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583 614 man cannot immediately pay any worthwhile part of the bride-price. The young man may then abduct the girl with the tacit consent of her parents, and thereby postpone having to pay the bride-price. After some time, the girl's relatives will require payment, but meantime his family will have been trying to scrape together at least a first instalment.

Genuine abduction does occur occasionally, but only when the man knows that the girl's clan is weak and that her relatives will thus have difficulty in claiming their rights. He will take the girl as far away as possible. If he is caught, her relatives will try to demand a bride-price. Perhaps he is already tired of the girl by then and wants to return her. She is the clan's property and is not being returned un-
583 damaged, so the man must pay damages for seduction and,
565 if the girl is pregnant, also for childbirth.

614 684 In the lower classes that would dispose of the matter. The baby would in any event be taken into the mother's clan and have her name. In the upper classes a girl would be turned out if she had had such an accident and the considerable damages required had not been paid immediately. The clan's prestige cannot be allowed to suffer.

Indian girls never keep a seducer's name secret, but at once tell their family who he is.

Among the lower classes cases of wives eloping are said to occur. The man to whom they have gone can legalize the position by paying compensation to the husband. If the husband agrees to do a deal, he cannot ask as much as the bride-price he himself paid, for the girl is by then less valuable.

560 583 It follows from all this that a woman has not the right to dispose of her own body. She belongs to her mother's family until she marries, and her closest relatives must be compensated for any injury done her. Once the man has paid the bride-price she becomes his property. If she is [768] widowed, she is inherited along with the rest of his effects by his nephews (sister's sons) and she has to purchase her freedom from them, paying a sum equivalent to the bride-price less what she is held to have lost in value since mar-
riage.

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riage. A Guajiro woman has no right to sell her body. The law does not recognize prostitution.

A married woman's relatives and clan do not leave her entirely in her husband's hands. He may not do as he likes with her, nor cause her suffering. Suffering and discomfort she is bound to experience in childbirth, however, and of that he is the primary cause; thus whether as a result of legal or illegal relations, the man must compensate the mother for her confinement by giving her family a few cattle. The woman herself may not eat their meat under any circumstances.

Originally the Guajiro clans were exogamous; members were not allowed to marry within the clan. That is no longer insisted upon, but not only brothers and sisters, but maternal males and cousins on the mother's side, are still reckoned among the forbidden degrees. It is unthinkable that an Indian girl should marry her maternal uncle; that would be like having her father for her husband. It once happened that an uncle and niece had a secret relationship and the girl became pregnant. A monk married them, but the Indians regarded the relationship as a heinous crime and the whole district reacted so violently that the couple had to leave the peninsula and go far away, where there was no risk of meeting members of their tribe.

There is nothing to prevent an Indian getting himself several wives. Infrequently white men have married into Guajiro families and they too have had to pay a bride-price. A number of poor Creoles have contracted Guajiro marriages with poor girls. I have already mentioned how foreign oil workers made Guajiro marriages. In those early days there were no arrangements made for employees' families, and the Guajiro girls suited those primitive conditions very well, though as a rule such marriages with Indian girls were very short-lived, as those of the Creoles with them still are. The girl is soon abandoned, if that can be done without risk, the girl's family in such cases being powerless. So the Indians told me.

The monks had already told us that where Creoles had married Guajiro girls of good family, those marriages had

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plain to the civil authorities; but the government inspector at the coast just smiled and shook his head when they asked if he could do anything about it.

'The only advice I can give you is that you double your plantation next year. Then perhaps the crop will suffice both for you and the Indians.'

When a monk once reproached an Indian who worked at the mission for pilfering sugar, the Indian replied: 'But, father, every Indian steals!'

As Simmons thought, the Cusina are made up of the bad elements, those outcast from their clans. In the long run no clan can shield a member who commits all sorts of crimes. Some flee to the hills because they cannot pay compensation for someone they have killed, nor count on help from their clan, which perhaps is also without resources. Such people are real outcasts, for anyone can kill them without risk of their clan's exacting vengeance. These outcasts once took refuge in the most desolate hills of the peninsula, Sierra de Cusina, and ever since others have come to replenish their ranks. It was said that they also had women, either captured or runaways. Grazing and water were said to be scarce there. It was a desolate part and none disputed it with the Cusina. They had to live largely by plunder and robbery. They could only keep goats in their hills, so what cattle they rustled, they ate. They were keen to get arms. We were told that none then alive had ever seen a Cusina. They attacked by night and killed everyone. That, of course, was the old Guajiro way: let no one live who might conceivably exact vengeance.

The old accounts from the days of the conquest also mention Cusina, but they must have meant ordinary Guajiro Indians from the area of the Cusina Hills.

The brigands were supposed to have scouts out on the roads, who signalled to their comrades when they scented prey. They very seldom dared attack a well-armed company, as ours was. We three white people each had a gun or rifle and a pistol; and in reserve we had some of my cheap barter pistols. We equipped Francisco with a saloon pistol which had a long barrel and looked impressive. Then we

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the chief game. The *Goajiro* who live near the coast sometimes catch fish (with hook and line), lobsters, mollusks, and crabs.

**Cattle raising.**—The *Goajiro* are primarily nomadic cattle raisers and, consequently, depend upon the water supply. In the rainy season they seek natural depressions, which they sometimes enlarge artificially, where the water may gather. In case of drought they wander toward the sea, where wells 30 to 40 feet (9 to 12 m.) deep are dug.

Besides cattle the *Goajiro* keep sheep, goats, horses (pl. 72, *bottom, left*), mules, pigs, and domestic fowls, which they take with them wherever they go. An estimate gives them 100,000 cattle, 200,000 sheep and goats, 20,000 horses and mules, and 30,000 donkeys. As cattle are a measure of wealth, the Indians are reluctant to kill them for food, but they utilize the milk or export the animals to Curaçao and Aruba in exchange for textiles and corn. Each tribe has its own cattle brand, and the annual round-up and branding is an occasion for great festivities. Horse races and other sports take place, and large quantities of food and drink are consumed.

**Food preparation.**—*Goajiro* diet consists almost entirely of meat and milk products. Goats and sheep are killed every day or two for meat, and the milk of the cows is made into butter and cheese. This diet is supplemented by yuca, cactus fruit, sugar, rice, and plantains, the last three obtained from Colombian and Venezuelan traders in exchange for skins. Meat that is not immediately consumed is suspended from tall poles, and skins are pegged to the ground and salted in preparation for sale. Butter is made by stirring the cream with a fluted stick in a calabash or wooden bucket. To make cheese, rennet is added to skimmed milk in a trough, and the curds are put in a primitive wooden cheese press, which is weighted with a heavy rock.

## HOUSES AND VILLAGES

Although the *Goajiro* are of a common origin, they are divided into sibs ("castes" or "tribes"), each living within a rather limited area (Simons, 1885, p. 796). The sibs are split into local groups, which occupy extended villages or rancherías, each with 2 to 50 houses (ranchos) and 10 to 250 or more Indians. Houses are always within gunshot distance of one another and so disposed that surprise attacks would be difficult. If a village is at all permanent, a protective cactus hedge surrounds it.

*Goajiro* nomadism makes elaborate houses unnecessary. Dwellings are mere lean-tos, arbors, and temporary gabled roofs supported on poles. Thatch is made from the core of the cactus, split lengthwise. Rough tables, chairs with rawhide seats, and benches are often used. The hammock is always present. House walls are often lacking, but a corner of the hut may be closed off for a girl's puberty seclusion. When mi-

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by an empty cartridge case, to which a metal ring is sometimes attached, giving a musical note with every shot.

Feathered arrows show many designs. Bird arrows may be tipped with cartridge cases or with large, rounded, wooden knobs about 1 inch (2.5 cm.) in diameter. Heads made from nails are used for small game. Serrated metal-tipped arrows are used in warfare; but the most dangerous arrow is pointed with a sting ray tail, sharpened to a fine needlelike point and fitted into the hollow end of a light cane shaft about 4 feet (1.2 m.) long and three-eighth inch (9 mm.) thick.

To prepare arrow poison, scorpions, centipedes, and poisonous spiders are mashed, snake venom is added, and the mixture is allowed to putrefy for several days. The poison will retain its potency for six months. It is kept in a short section of bamboo, which is carried around the waist, together with the arrow points, each in a hollow reed. Before shooting, an Indian dips the point into the poison and inserts it in the shaft.

A decorated leather wrist strap is worn as a bowstring guard.

**Fire making.**—Fire is made by twirling an arrow on a cactus hearth; the spark is caught in dry grass.

## TRADE

There is considerable trade between the *Goajiro* and foreigners. Firearms and ammunition, cloth, beads, blankets, rum, cutlery, corn, crude sugar, rice, plantains, and tobacco are imported in exchange for salt, cattle, cheese, milk, hides, pearls and pearl shells, logwood (*Haematoxylon campechianum*), and divi-divi (*Caesalpinia coriaria*).

During the salt season the Indians of the interior flock to Manaure, where they are paid for loading sacks of salt into the warehouse and onto ships. Both men and women take part in the work, the men filling the sacks and the women carrying them.

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The *Goajiro* are subdivided into 30 odd matrilineal sibs ("castes" or "tribes"), each identified with an animal. Some of the larger and more important sibs are split into smaller groups, each with a special totem. (See Simons, 1885, p. 796, and Weston, 1937, p. 139, for a list of the various sibs, together with the totem animals and the locality which they inhabit.) The members of any sib are more widely spread throughout the peninsula than previously thought, although in some localities, one sib may be found to the exclusion of all others. Each "caste," according to Petrullo (1937, p. 155), "holds sovereignty over a well-defined territory." The sib which is largest and wealthiest in livestock is that of the Urianas. It has many subdivisions, such as Uriana jaguar, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), and Uriana gecko (a lizard). The

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Urianas are connected by marriage with the Pushaina, another wealthy "tribe" of the *Goajiro*.

Each extended village (section or rancheria) consists of related sib members who are bound by close ties and who unite against outsiders if one of them is wronged. Intermarriage among the sibs is common.

The role of the maternal uncle in *Goajiro* culture is of great importance. Santa Cruz's detailed study of it (1941) will be summarized here. Types of behavior, both prescribed and unformalized, vary, not only according to the seniority of either uncle or nephew but also according to that of the nieces. The maternal uncle must leave all his property to his oldest sister's oldest son, the other nephews receiving nothing. In practice the maternal uncle transfers most of his property to his own children, and after his death little if anything remains for the nephew. The attitude of a senior nephew toward his senior maternal uncle largely depends on what inheritance he expects from him. If the nephew marries a girl from a wealthy family and has, therefore, to pay a high bride price, the senior maternal uncle is expected to make a donation to meet the price. The uncle has no authority, however, in the selection of the bride.

Etiquette requires that in company the nephew must always remain silent if his senior maternal uncle is speaking; if the nephew wishes to speak he must first ask his uncle's permission. The nephew must always show respect and conduct himself with propriety. On the other hand, a senior uncle should not criticize or laugh at his senior nephew. No such behavior is prescribed between father and son or between other uncles and nephews. Public opinion castigates any deviation from this behavior between uncle and nephew.

The relationship between a maternal uncle and his niece is just the reverse of this, for the uncle is the recipient of benefits. He receives the bride price paid for the niece, and he contributes nothing toward the dowry for the bridegroom. The maternal uncle, however, is empowered to accept or reject a prospective bridegroom, and the girl has no recourse in the matter. A girl is respectful and considerate, although less rigidly formal, toward her senior maternal uncle. Her behavior toward her other uncles depends solely on her regard for them.

## POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

There is no central government uniting all the sibs, but each sib or subdivision thereof has its chiefs who inherit their position matrilineally. The oldest chief has greatest authority and may carry a knobbed stick as symbol of his authority. He is generally the wealthiest and has most retainers. Hereditary status is very important, and a man born poor may never achieve a high position, even though he acquires much wealth. He may, however, marry a woman of high rank and his children will inherit her rank. Chiefs are polygynous and have many daughters, for

622 Chiefs are polygynous and have many daughters, for
595 whom very high bride prices are paid—sometimes thousands of animals,
583 worth $6,000 to $10,000. Such rich chiefs take great pride in their
556 daughters, dressing them in fine silken robes and necklaces of gold and pearls and providing them with personal servants.

567 There is a class of slaves who are beneath the chiefs' retainers in the social hierarchy. It consists of people born into this status and of captives.

### PROPERTY

422 All cattle, though individually owned, belong in theory to the local group as a whole and are worked for the common benefit of all. For example, the cattle paid as a bride price when a girl marries within her own sib go to a new owner, but the milk, butter, cheese, and hides from them continue to be shared by everyone in the sib. When a woman receives cattle as a bride price for her daughter any new stock born to them belongs to the daughter's husband and his sons, and when the animals are rounded up for the annual branding each son is allowed to brand a certain number of them.

### ETIQUETTE

576 The *Goajiro* are in general unfriendly to strangers but have a well-
574 established code of hospitality. Strangers calling at a house must wait until invited in. Inside a house a bowl of chicha or rum (coffee when available) is the first gift offered the visitor, who is thereafter given a hammock and treated as a member of the family. A special feast may
565 be arranged if there are many guests. A guest of high rank is feasted, and some of the young girls of the house may be placed at his disposal.

### LAW AND ORDER

627 The chiefs have little power outside their own local group, where they settle minor disputes. The solution of many disputes and transgressions of custom are left to the parties concerned. The laws of group respon-
628 sibility and group retaliation lead to frequent intertribal feuds. A person
614 without a strong sib to protect him is helpless, for others may use any act which may conceivably be interpreted as harmful as pretext for demanding indemnity. For example, a person injured while intoxicated may demand payment from the person who sold him the rum, or a person injured by a borrowed animal may demand payment from the owner of the animal; a thief who hurts himself when trespassing on the property of his intended victim will demand compensation of him; and anyone aiding a sick or wounded person who subsequently dies incurs a liability.

672 If a person injures himself he must make an expiatory gift to the members of his own sib and a lesser gift to his father's relatives. If a child dies when under the care of one parent, this parent must reimburse

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the individual who was to provide the raw material for this article. This is more or less a biography of the man who was at the same time guide, interpreter, and driver for the author and with whom extensive conversations, both formal and informal, took place.[2]

Guajiro culture, like most native cultures in the New World, has suffered great acculturation due to the impact with European ways of life. Some of these cultures have been more resistant to change than others; and within one culture, certain aspects have remained closer to the traditional forms than have others. In Guajiro culture, it is perhaps the social organization, with all of its ramifications, that has resisted recent acculturation more than the other aspects of the culture. We know very little of the pre-cattle culture of the Guajiro and even Juan de Castellanos, writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, describes them as having numerous herds of domestic animals. Nowhere in the literature on the Guajiros is there an example of status having been acquired outside the traditional way and the present writer, in his two field trips to the region, has found only the case here described.

As it is not the purpose of this article to give a full description of the social organization of the Guajiro, it will be sufficient to state that the tribe is divided into some twenty-five matrilineal clans, of which about eleven are large and rather powerful in their socio-economic aspects, and the rest—due mainly to the fact of having a small number of members—are weak, and relatively unimportant. Inheritance is along the mother's line, an individual acquiring property from his maternal uncle. The avunculate in all its social and economic aspects, is a very important institution (Santa Cruz, 1941).

Traditionally the clans are exogamous with incest taboos and punishments for those who break them. This exogamic characteristic of the clan is apparently disappearing, as several cases of endogamous unions were found among the Guajiro living in the outskirts of the city of Maracaibo. No endogamous marriages, however, were found in the Guajiro proper by the present writer, although Gregorio Hernandez de Alba (1936) has

[2] Proper names, especially of the subject, have all been disguised in some way, so as to spare personal feelings.

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reported several in the vicinity of the town of Riohacha in Colombia.

Residence is normally matrilocal, although, at present, there is a tendency towards neo-locality. The author has found no case of patrilocality either in the field or in the literature.

The names of the five more important clans in Guajiro society, and those with which we are concerned in this article are: Uriana, Epinayú, Pushaina, Guajariyú, and Epieyú. These designations have lost meaning in Guajiro and not even the oldest members questioned by the writer remember what they mean. The clans also have an animal or plant totem closely attached to food and hunting taboos. How deep this totemic aspect of the clan goes the writer does not know and the two references found in the literature, A. Ernst (1887) and A. Jahn (1927), simply mention the fact without going into details.

Today the clans have no distinct geographic distribution. Members of the different clans are found scattered more or less at random over the whole peninsula, and in both Colombia and Venezuela. This may be due perhaps to the extensive migrations of families within the region in their quest for water for themselves and their domestic animals. This necessity has also probably contributed to the gradual breakdown of the matrilocal residence. The earlier literature suggests that the clans may have had, at one time, certain regional characteristics. Juan de Castellanos cites that the Guajiros living near what is now the town of Riohacha all belonged to the Uriana clan. A. Ernst goes as far as showing a distribution map of the clans. A. Jahn and G. Hernandez de Alba draw their conclusion of geographic distribution for the clans based on the earlier sources but definitely state that today the clans present the scattered distribution the present writer found.

The Guajiro culture may be described in brief as pastoral, with a small-scale supplementary agriculture, especially in the southern part of the peninsula where water and more fertile lands are available. Domestic animals, cattle in particular, represent the foundation of wealth to the Guajiro. His economic position, and likewise his social status, is measured in the number of cattle, sheep, goats, asses and horses he owns. This pastoral complex permeates practically every aspect of the culture.

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159 554 office expired (in two years time) he sought and obtained a position in the Federal Ministry of Public Works in a project which was seeking the best places to drill water wells all over the Guajira peninsula. He held this job for about a year and half. He is now employed in the Guajira office, in Paraguaipoa, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and is "ad honorem" agent of the Comisión Indigenista in the Guajira. In these two jobs he gets paid only when he performs certain work, such as when he recently acted as guide and interpreter for the present writer.

159 554 583 614 585 During his term as Prefect of Paez (Sinamaica) he married, according to the Guajira tradition and law, one of the daughters of To'olito Fernandez, for whom he had to pay a very high price, as the girl was the daughter of an important chief. Following Guajira law the price for the bride was gathered among the members of the Uriana clan to which Perez belongs due to his mother's heritage. Incidentally, as Fernandez also belongs to the Uriana clan he had to contribute in the collection of the bride-price of his own daughter although, of course, the amount collected did not go to him but to the girl's maternal uncle. This was a typical exogamous marriage as the girl belongs to the [595] Guajariyú clan, that being her mother's clan. At present, Perez keeps two households, one in Maracaibo with his white wife and son, whom he visits once or twice a week, if he is not doing any special work for the ministries; the other, is his native household at the Laguna del Pajaro, Guajira, where he remains most of his time. He has had no children with his Indian wife. His two simultaneous marriages have brought him no trouble with the law, as according to Guajiro tradition polygyny is perfectly acceptable, and according to Venezuelan law he has only one legitimate wife.

159 595 It is interesting to note at this point that Perez denies having a white wife in Maracaibo, although he does not deny having the son and shows pride in saying that his son is in medical school. The present writer was not able to fathom the reasons behind this denial. Data regarding his Maracaibo marriage was obtained from Perez's father who was also unable to furnish good motives for the fact that Perez tries to hide that he has a household in that city. To test this point the writer, after the

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cordial, no fights or even harsh words between them was ever noticed, and when Perez was arrested, as mentioned before, his wife showed great concern and distress and did everything possible to have him released from jail and brought home. Still the question of how much real affection, especially on Perez's part, is involved in this marriage cannot be answered with certainty. As regards the grantings of favors to the Guajiro, it is obvious that he makes a careful selection and never or hardly ever grants them to indivduals who could not, in the future, be of some help to him.

Whether or not Perez will attain a position of respect and leadership such as Panchito Silva and José de la Rosa Fernandez enjoy is hard to say, but the writer will try to make an analysis of the situation and draw certain tentative conclusions.

There is no doubt that clan leadership with all its privileges and responsibilities is slowly dying out in the Guajira. Among the 25 odd clans existing at present the writer has met only two individuals who have all the earmarks of a true economic, political, and social leader, namely, Panchito Silva and José de la Rosa Fernandez. Informants have told him that there are two others, the heads of the Epinayú and the Epieyú clans living in the upper Guajira and in Colombia respectively. From what information was gathered these two other leaders fit closely to the pattern described for Silva and Fernandez. The remainder of the clans have no true, powerful leaders, although they do have elder members who are more or less respected and consulted in certain clan matters. Around the turn of the century, however, according to the information gathered first hand from old men like Silva and Fernandez, and from the literature, there were at least twenty powerful leaders among the clans.

Undoubtedly one of the contributing factors to the breakdown of clan leadership has been the great horizontal movement in population among the Guajiro in the last fifty years. Such spread would tend, naturally, to break down the regional characteristics of the clan and ultimately help to bring about a loss of personal contact between a leader and the rest of his clan and hence the loss of control. Whether there are other economic, social, or political factors in operation favoring this breakdown is not fully known. The writer suspects that there may be but this problem would need further intensive investigation. The

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writer hopes in future researches to complete the picture of leadership among the Guajiro and the present breakdown in their social organization.

As mentioned above, traditional form clan leadership is obtained either through inheritance or by selection made by a council of elders. Perez's case is entirely different and he has followed white culture means and ways, more or less, in obtaining leadership in Guajiro society irrespective of clan organization. In other words, he has become, in certain aspects, a leader of the Guajiro as a whole and not of a particular clan. It is to be expected that as more and more Guajiro individuals go to Maracaibo for higher education, these new methods, such as those utilized by Perez, of attaining status will become stronger and will also be a contributing factor in the final breakdown of the traditional clan leadership. Some years must pass, however, to determine conclusively whether this is the path that leadership in the Guajira will take. At the moment four important clans still have their traditional leaders—the Pushiana, Uriana, Epinayú, and Epieyú—with strong and well definied heirs to their present leaders; and as long as the inheritance lines remain firm, clan leadership among these four clans will cling to the traditional. The rest of the clans, having lost their lines of inheritance and lacking men of strong personality to become their unquestioned leaders, will tend, we predict, to fall in step with new leaders of the Perez type. Such leaders will, undoubtedly, become more numerous as the acculturation processes go forward.

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105 Only a few accounts concerning the social order and po-
175 litical organization of the Guajiro are available from that
614 period. It cannot be ascertained when the Spanish conquistadors first found clues to the family groups existing there, true sibs /Sippen/ in the sense of modern ethnology. Father Álvarez José Nicolás de la Rosa (5) in 1739 described certain burial

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5. Under "Álvarez" I am citing in the following the rare work, Floresta de la Santa Iglesia Catedral de la Ciudad de Santa Marta /Anthology of the Santa Iglesia Cathedral of the City of Santa Marta/, compiled by Father Álvarez Don José Nicolás de la Rosa in 1739 and printed in Valencia in 1833. Francis C. Nicholas translated significant sections from this work into English and supplied supplementary notes which a trip through Guajira induced him to make. According to his judgment, "the book forms a stepping-stone to a study of the history and antiquities of the Indians of northern South America" /cited in English/ (p. 606). This translation, with the title, "The Aborigines of the Province of Santa Marta, Colombia," is to be found in American Anthropologist, 3, 1901, pp. 606-649. Pages 625-636 are devoted to the Guajiro.

ceremonies and in this connection made the incidental remark that they were held "according to the castes [clans] by which they are distinguished" /cited in English/ (p. 634). He enumerated six, "thus: Casta de Guacamaya [macaw] (this is the

105 /532 cont./
175 highest), Casta de Paguil, Casta de Guacharaca, Casta de
614 Mono, Casta de Machin, Casta de Gallinazo (this is the poorest)" /cited in English/ (ibid.). Explanatory additions are lacking. In the light of later successful inquiries, however, these few statements are given their full meaning.

Not until 1870 did A. Ernst publish an extended list of these totem groups (p. 329). He enumerated twelve of them and called them "tribes /Stämme/," which "have definite dwelling sites." He correctly separated from them the so-
101 called Cocinas, which "perhaps are a different tribe than the
175 rest of the populace and a vagabond gang of robbers that makes
571 all paths unsafe"(6).

6. Father Álvarez had already referred to them as "more barbarous than any of the Guagiros, and consequently less tractable and more dangerous, horrible and proud" /cited in English/ (p. 635). In the same sense Stutzer (p. 136) describes them as "dregs of all castes. They murder in order to rob. It is regarded as dangerous to pass through their area alone or in small groups..." They do not merit further mention.

175 A few years later the British engineer, F. Simons,
614 traveled through Guajira. He related in his excellent report to the Royal Geographical Society (1885): "The Guajiros are subdivided into many families or castes, bearing much analogy to the ancient clans of Scotland. Each caste or rather family circle is united against all comers... Besides the name, each caste or family represents some animal, and many of the minor castes, over and above /533/ /a table appears here/ /534/ their

[text continues on p. 6]

Distinctive Marks of the Guajiro Castes

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| Mark | Caste | Place | Totem | Mark | Caste | Place | Totem |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Epiayu | Alta Guajira | Macaw | | Hayariyú | Alta Guajira | Dog |
| | " | " | " | | " | Castilletes | " |
| | " | Portete | " | | " | Nazareth | " |
| | " | " | " | | Uraliyú | | Rattlesnake |
| | " | Jarare | " | | Sapuana | Alta Guajira | Garay or stone curlew |
| | " | " | " | | Pushaina | Jarare | Peccary |
| | " | Alta Guajira | " | | Goujirú | Pto. Estrella | Partridge |
| | Uriana | San José | Jaquar | | Arpushana | Alta y Baja Guajira | Turkey buzzard |
| | " | " | " | | Husayú | Jarare | Rabbit |
| | " | Buenos Aires | " | | Epinayú | | Burro |
| | " | Pto. Lopez | " | | Uléguana | Alta Guajira | Machorro |
| | " | Cosina | " | | Hirnú | " | Fox |
| | " | Alta Guajira | " | | Pausayú | | Black wasp |
| | " | " | " | | Sijuana | Yimarú | Bee |
| | Ipuana | " | Mushale | | " | Pto. Espada | " |
| | " | Jarare | " | | " | Alta Guajira | " |
| | Hayariyú | Alta Guajira | Dog | | Guaririyú | | Partridge |

/The heading, the column headings, and the column entries under "Totem" have been translated from the Spanish./

/534 cont./

175 614 own symbol, adopt another of some more powerful denomination, to enjoy the privilege of a good protector. There are at present, altogether, some thirty odd castes among the Goajiros... There are about ten of importance, chief among these the Urianas. This, the largest caste in the Guajira, has subdivided or split up into many ramifications, such as Uriana tiger, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), Uriana gecko (lizard). This family is at present not only by far the most numerous, but also the richest; due to its connections by marriage with the Pushainas, formerly the wealthiest of the land" /cited in English/. In an "Appendix" (p. 796) at the end of his report, Simons gives a "List of Tribes or Castes, with their respective animals and favourite resting-places" /cited in English/; each of the twenty-two names is found in its proper region on the map provided by him (7).

114 614 7. Frazer (Vol. 3, p. 560) reproduced this table in full and clearly expressed his conviction that "the Guajiros have a totemic system of the normal pattern" /cited in English/. In connection with this, he discussed in detail the mother-right customs of this tribe. — Kirchhoff (p. 154) analyzed only the relationship between paternal and maternal relatives, so far as it was then possible when "the description of the kinship organization" was" /still/ most incomplete and unsatisfactory." He also clearly made the distinction between the extended family /Grossfamilie/ and sib and

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distinctly stressed that the sib "need not necessarily be a local unit.... The bond that holds together the members of a sib is the idea that they descend from the same ancestor and are therefore brothers and sisters..." (p. 90). Actually, the clan members /Klanmitgliedern/ of any sib are allowed to move in complete freedom over all of Guajira.— Vegamian (pp. 36, 347), too, explained: "The Guajiro Indians are divided into castes /castas/ of totemic denomination" /translated from the Spanish/. He discussed in detail their local placement and explained the somewhat variable spelling of the clan names among the authors as follows: "Among the same Indians, perfectly expert in their tongue, there is no uniformity in the pronunciation of one and the same word" /translated from the Spanish/.

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A. Ernst in his second report (1887) used the reliable details furnished by Simons and declared concerning them: "One gains from his presentation a clear picture of the peculiar social relations in which the inhabitants of the peninsula live. What the Spanish writers in their meager reports designated with the vague name 'parcialidades /factions, parties/,' Simons recognized quite rightly as family /Familie/ in the ethnological sense (clan, gens) and gave for several of them the habitual place of residence and the totem

/534 cont./

114 concerned..." (p. 426). "Most are no longer explicable
175 from the present language of the Guajiro..." According to
614 Simons, "there is no doubt that the Guajiro believe in their descent from such an animal... How far the use of the totem extends among the Guajiro is not said either by Simons or by any other reporter" (pp. 440f.). For such an animal, Ernst (1887, p. 442) regarded the valuation "totem" as proper and promised a linguistic analysis of the names for the twenty-two totem-animals noted by Simons.

614 Individual clans /Klane/ exceed others in economic influence and social significance. The ones smaller in number of persons attach themselves to one or several others. The belief in the kindred solidarity of the clan members is grounded in the traditionally transmitted conviction /535/ /map appears here/ /536/ of actual descent from the same totem-animal. Ernst further states: "Since the individual families [= clan groups] live, if not exactly in hostility, nevertheless separated from one another, marriages between members of different families [take] place only in rare cases" (p. 442); which is synonomous with clan-endogamy as the prevailing rule.

114 A series of names given by other reporters are found in
614 part in A. Jahn (p. 142), Armstrong-Métraux (p. 383), and R. Crist (1959, p. 485). Occasionally one has the impression that these authors drew on Simons and Ernst as their sole sources. The statements that the journalist J. Weston makes are false.

## 2. Most Recent Reports

What Virginia Gutiérrez has put down in her article, "Organización Social en la Guajira" (1948) comes from personal field research. Her article became known to me only after my crossing of the peninsula. The myth recorded by her, in which sibs still living in Guajira are mentioned by name, follows here in free translation. The same account was repeated to me, with a few insignificant variations, by

Text continues on p. 10]

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two wives of the influential and intelligent Cacique Briscoi (alias Antonio Juan López); from both I was given the assurance that it is known to nearly all of their people. In a subsequent conversation with still other women it became clear that the social and juristic role of the clan system had become simplified and dulled in the course of the centuries up to the present, and above all that the original rigor of its demands had become milder and in part even lost. Certain practices still maintained and various fragments of tradition permit one to piece together an adequately clear picture of the totemistic organization in Guajira, despite many manifestations of mother-right.

Our Indians have a mythological explanation of how the whole Guajiro people was originally divided into many clans (8). Each totem-clan has its individual symbol, comparable

8. Petrullo (p. 155) supplements this by confirming: "Casta [is] the major social grouping in Guajiro society. Each casta claims a mythological origin and holds sovereignty over a well-defined territory" /cited in English/.

to a monogram. Every clan-member marks himself and his personal goods, predominately domestic animals, with it. The Indians paint this symbol with ordinary watercolor on a stone, carve it in wooden objects (plates, style of a mattock, house posts), tattoo it on their arms, etc., all in plain fun and without any serious intention of demonstrating their right of ownership. On the other hand, the same symbol, which is peculiar to a clan, is branded without exception on every domestic animal that the individual clan-member owns. Obviously it is the same sign for all the animals of all the members of a particular clan; yet the animals remain /537/ the personal property of their owner, and the latter himself

/537 cont./

614 knows precisely which animals belong to him and which
212 property belongs to other clan-members.
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422 In a way also customary among us (for example, the burning on of the steed-brand for foals), the clan-symbol in Guajira is pressed into the skin of the domestic animal with a branding iron, usually on the rear leg, sometimes on
[413] the lower neck. The branding iron is a rod as thick as a finger and about a meter long, on whose lower end the brand, made in iron, is fixed. This is highly heated and briefly set on the skin of the animal with moderate pressure (9).

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9. Everyone knows that many livestock-raising primitive peoples use the method described here for "branding" their domestic animals, and, to be sure, do it primarily with the intention of indicating the individual possessor or a group consisting of several men as the owner. M. Merker (p. 163) reports this for the Masai. H. Field collected more than a thousand such markings (Figs. 24-43) among the Bedouin and related tribes in the Near East. It might seem surprising that individual ones among them are very similar to the brands of the Guajiro. This correspondence, however, can easily be traced back to the mentality of the natives and their undeveloped technical skill, as well as to the brittle wrought-iron itself. The "branding iron" probably goes back to an earlier period of mankind; from its place of invention, it went on its way

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171 231 422 around the world simultaneously with the domestic animals themselves.

614 212 231 422 177 614 212 723 The branding described was probably learned by the Indians from the Spaniards themselves, simultaneously with the adoption of the first European domestic animals, and has been retained since then. It is all the more surprising that the branding iron (hierro) appears in an old myth which for its part clearly states where the customary individual clan-signs came from. The following version (according to V. Gutiérrez, p. 168) is common in the northern part of the peninsula:

Not far from Nazareth (10) a hill rises behind Itojoro.

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10. This post lies only several kilometers south of Puerto Estrella and is actually a small Catholic mission station. Cf. Stutzer, pp. 131 ff., and Barranquilla, pp. 151 ff.

Here, under an oil tree, Mareiwa (11) came into the world.

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11. That is the spelling of this mythological name that I felt to be correct, as did V. Gutiérrez (p. 168). Chaves (1946, p. 307) explains in the myth concerning "Las Serranías de la Guajira," among other things: "Mareigua [is] one of the principal deities of the Guajiro people, who with his supernatural power converts persons into hills, separates the

/537 cont./

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sea from the land and the planting of trees and animals to benefit man" /translated from the Spanish/. The original figure of Mareiwa is probably that of a culture-hero. Chaves (1953, p. 183) makes the same assumption, but adds that this personality is "at the present time like God for many mestizos" /translated from the Spanish/. Jahn (p. 183) declares "that the Spanish have identified /Maleiwa/ with the true God or Supreme Being" /translated from the Spanish/. In Torrano (p. 188) one reads "Maréigua = God, Supreme Being" /translated from the Spanish/. Unfortunately even today it is still true that the "Goajiro religion is imperfectly known" /cited in English/ (Armstrong-Métraux, p. 382).

614 812 773 He was found as an infant, who grew rapidly like any Indian child. He ate tuuma (12) and dressed like the Guajiro.

[262]

12. It was identified for me as tuna, which is the fruit of the Opuntia (Indian fig) and very well-known in South America. Cf. Vegamian, p. 214.

The mother was an old woman; her hut stood in the north. The father, a certain Saramai, was also said to be a god. [824 827] Because Mareiwa was born under an oil tree, this tree does

/537 cont./

614 not lose its green leaves, even in the dry season. The Indians
212 seek shelter under its branches during storms, because lightning
773 will not strike there.
[824]
[821]

/538/ Mareiwa created an Indian woman named Borunka; she became the mother of all the Guajiro people (13).

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13. Chaves (1953, p. 181) reports another myth of the "Origen de los Guajiros," in which, however, the totem clans are not mentioned; therefore, no contradiction of the myth presented here can be brought forward from there.

He also gave her a companion, by whom she became pregnant. When the time of her delivery came, however, she felt incapable of giving birth. The pains lasted for three days without delivery. Her vagina was set with teeth. Mareiwa removed them. At the same time he took two ribs, the lowest one from each side, from her mate. He inserted them in Borunka so that she could later give birth without hindrance, though not without pain.

614 Since loss of blood was connected with delivery since
212 then, Mareiwa summoned all the birds. He commanded the
773 sangre de toro, or pincwait, to wash itself where the birth
825 took place. He gave the same order to the troupials (weaver
844 birds of the family Icteridae), as well as to the icó /ishu, Phoenicotraupis rubra/ with the black wings, whose breast feathers and head-tuft are red in color, and finally to the macaws. The woodpecker /Ceophloeus lineatus/ arrived late for this bath. Mareiwa said to him, "You came late, to be sure, but I shall paint your tuft anyway," and he painted it red. Thus, the birds mentioned have red spots in their plumage.

614 Borunka bore several children, and the Guajiro pro-
212 ceeded to multiply. When there were many of them, Mareiwa
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/538 cont./

●614 212 773 [262] returned to them. He distributed among them the seeds of the watermelon (Citrullus vulgaris), maize (Zea), squash, and all the other vegetables with which the Guajiro nourish themselves. Until that time no Guajiro had laid out a seeded field; before that anyone who wished to eat had reached for the fruit that grew by itself. Mareiwa gathered all the 614 212 773 825 zancalargas (thin-legged grallatores) and weaver birds; he commanded a flock of them to go far away and feed on iguarayas (cereals) and the fruit of the Indian fig (Opuntia). He likewise summoned a flock of rock pigeons; they brought hepechi cherries. Then he distributed the birds over all of Guajira. With their excrement they were to make the simultaneously eliminated seeds germinate; the latter were to grow and cover the whole land with a blanket of plants on which fruit would ripen and serve the people for food.

614 212 773 [231] Mareiwa handed over to each native man a pair of goats, donkeys, cattle, horses, and pigs. Then he assembled all the people with their animals in the district of Arachi near Siapana. There, on a cliff, he engraved the symbols, one of which he intended to assign to each of the family groups, the children of Borunka. They are still visible today on that cliff.

Thus he established there the sign-patterns for the Epiayú, Ipuana, Uriana, Sapuana, Jayariyú, Apshana, Síjuana, Urariyú, Epinayú, Jitnú, Soriyú, Pausayú, Uriyú, Woriyú, Urenanaka, Matpishana, Uyarayú, Wariruyú, Jusayú, Woruboruyú, and others. Mareiwa handed over these property [422] marks to the people in order that the movable property of one group would not be mistaken for that of the others.

614 212 773 825 422 Each group has its animal-sign by means of which it distinguishes its property from that of the other groups. This happened for the following reason: these animals were to have become Indians. But they ate the herds that Mareiwa had assigned to each group. As punishment he left them in their animal state as symbols of the individual groups which

/538 cont./

614 212 773 825 427 had been insulted or harmed by them. Thus, the leader of the black vultures /Coragyps atratus foetens/ had eaten a head of cattle of the Epiayú, and he therefore remained the symbol for this group. The caricari /Brazilian falcon/ devoured an animal of the Ipuana group. The Uriana people now have as their totem-animal the jaguar (Felis onca). The Sapuana group claims for itself the alcaraván /stone curlew/ (Burhinus bistriatus vocifer), the Jayariyú people the dog, the Apshana the kite, the Sijuana the wasp, the Urariyú the rattlesnake (Crotalus terrificius), the Jitnú people the fox (Canis azarae), the Soriyú people the cataneja (macaw, Ara), the Pausayú the black wasp, the Uyarayú the deer (Cervus alaphus), etc.

614 773 /539/ V. Gutiérrez (p. 170) then presents another myth. This describes how the individual totem-clans were assigned their names and definite districts of residence after a fateful, tragic scene of disobedience of the creatures against their creator took place. This report, too, emphatically brings out the fact that Mareiwa personally, by his will and authority, introduced a totemistic way of life for the first living beings in Guajira. The myth has the dramatic conclusion: "For the last time Mareiwa spoke with them /the totem groups/ in order to take his leave. He therefore addressed them: It was my will that you should live here! I am leaving now; I shall be watching you from heaven."

614 101 The individual totem-districts with the thirty-four clan names are noted on the map (14).[1] The appropriate clan-

193 194 614 14. The spelling and pronunciation of the clan designations favored here by and large resemble the Spanish sounds. Young Indians today feel a marked uncertainty in using the correct Spanish names for individual totem-animals; even in the pronunciation of the Guajiro designations

[1] [see p.9.--Analyst]

/539 cont./

193 194 614 [128]

a foreign observer encounters slight variations — as has just been mentioned. For this reason, in the table (p. 5) I put in the names corresponding with precisely the sounds that I heard most frequently; I have taken the map (p. 9) unchanged from the original.

614 101 178 101 5[illegible] 614

marks are found in the table. Every Guajiro knows them. As an established tradition, every generation has taken over the details from the others, either as clan property or as a duty. But as a result of so many hostile encounters of the clans with one another — the Guajiro even in early times made themselves known as very quarrelsome — the boundaries of the individual clan-districts have shifted. Some clans have actually disappeared, either because their members were entirely destroyed or because individuals from them were incorporated into other clans. Therefore, the number and boundaries of the individual clan-districts were and are subject to insignificant fluctuations. I was unable to ascertain when the map provided — taken from a Colombian authority — was drawn; it appears to have come out around 1935. It is also found in V. Gutiérrez (p. xvi).

### 3. Concluding Remarks

614 [423]

Spanish writers have reported on "castas" in Guajira from the early colonial period; the designation corresponds to actual totemistic clans. Recently it could be demonstrated that some thirty of them have existed since antiquity. The members of any one clan were entitled by common law to move freely over the whole peninsula without being hindered by the boundaries. When Petrullo (p. 155) states unmistakably,

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614 "Each caste holds sovereignty over a well-defined territory" 423 /cited in English/, he correctly presents each clan area as common property. Earlier observers must have already been aware of such circumstances, for they /540/ have represented them with desirable clarity. Such a definite clan-localization is based on the mythology.

614 In Guajira only well-known animals, toward which no reverent veneration is shown, are known as totems; also, avoidance rules do not exist. Clan membership is determined [611] by the mother. Many matriarchal laws and customs are observed strictly and conscientiously by the Indians; they have been described in detail by Sinons, Ernst, Petrullo, Santa Cruz, Armstrong-Métraux, Gutiérrez, Crist (1959), and others.

601 It should be added here that particular kinship-terms 614 were first gathered and published recently by J. Wilbert (p. 59). There are twenty-six basic terms and "most terms are applied to more than one relative so that the system is classificatory in type" /cited in English/.

614 Finally, the question as to whether the Guajiro feel themselves connected by kinship to their totem-animal is still to be answered. As the first, Jahn (p. 145) expressed himself on this: "Each faction regards some animal as its 'totem' or coat-of-arms. It has not been possible to find out whether they believe that they are descended from it; rather it appears to be a symbolic or heraldic emblem" /translated from the Spanish/. V. Gutiérrez (p. 173) expresses herself more decisively and informatively: "Actually there is no belief that they [the Guajiro] descended from it [= totem], nor is there any special prohibition against harming or killing it. The idea that in the representative animal is found the genesis does not seem to have existed even in the remote past. The origins that are come across in the legends do not include this idea. At present they laugh when one asks about the animal of his 'casta'; many confide... that they belong to the jaguar, to the bee, to the rattlesnake... They claim to be as brave as that animal..." /translated from the Spanish/.

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614 The continued influencing through a series of generations, even though nevertheless brief, by Spanish culture and the 614 177 178 spirit of modern times has finally also altered the primitive judgment and feeling of these Indians and has strengthened in them the pride to assert themselves now as "enlightened." It therefore need not be surprising that today they laugh in the face of a foreign visitor when the latter poses his questions as though he himself regarded a blood descent of the clan members from their totem animal as established and factual. [123] The above-mentioned Cacique Briscol (15) even whispered

15. This pure-blooded, intelligent, and experienced Indian refers several times to the clans of his Guajiro people in his well-written story.

disrespectfully in my ear: "You must not suppose that we think of an animal when we present the totem as our ancestor. Every ancestor was as human as we are; only at the very beginning was he just like the totem that each clan has had since then. Our forefathers respected their totem animal more than we do today; they neither persecuted it nor ate its flesh. Now the habits of our ancestors are disappearing among us, one after another. There are now only sixteen independent 614 'castas'; their number was formerly double that." V. Gutiérrez 173 herself agreed with Briscol's interpretation when she presented 114 the introductory words to another myth, "The Distribution /541/ of the Clan Districts" (p. 170): Mareiwa "then told the birds they were Indians" /translated from the Spanish/. Such words make it clear: the myth knows no distinction between totem animal and Indian in their mode of being and acting! Therefore one does not get anywhere in the analysis of myths with a knife-sharp dialectic lacking any imagination. 614 Thus, I may indeed, along with the reporters from former times up to our day, regard the social division of the Guajiro people as properly totemistic in style. Two years ago (1959),

/541 cont./

614 Crist (p. 485) wrote: "The Indians of the Guajira are divided into various clans or blood groups, castas, each with its distinguishing totem representing the animal with whose traits, according to legend, the clan was originally imbued" /cited in English/.

614 212 The thought complex that has solidified around the totem of our Indians — to mention it once more in conclusion — gets significant confirmation of its truely totemistic character by the visible symbol for each one of the three dozen of them. None of these totem signs — whether one calls them clan signs, symbols, monograms, emblems, property marks, or something else — is revealed as typically [286] Christian or Spanish in design. The Indian women of olden times wove them into their pieces of weaving, and, as has already been mentioned above (p. 10), the men put their clan-signs on other objects. According to the myth, the [273] original ancestor of a given clan was assigned it in an individual presentation by Mareiwa himself, and it has been retained down to the present day. /See the foreign text for the list of "Sources Mentioned," pp. 541-542./

/542/ Supplement:

114 614 As a consequence of a long stay in East Asia, which I concluded a short time ago, two pertinent articles first came to my attention when the article presented here was already in printing:

[113] Santa Cruz, Antonio, "Acquiring Status in Guajiro Society," Anthropological Quarterly, 33, 1960, pp. 115-127.

Wilbert, Johannes, "Identificación Etno-Lingüística de Tribus Indígenas del Occidente de Venezuela," Mem. Soc. de Ciencias Natur. La Salle, 21, 1961, pp. 5-14.

Both articles refer to the clan-division among the Guajiro described by me. The almost completed printing of my article, however, does not permit me to discuss them in detail; therefore this brief reference must suffice.